

The Living Waters Catholic Prayer Book

Presented to
the teachers of Living Waters Catholic Regional Division #42
on behalf of the Board of Trustees

September 2000

*"Please accept this book of prayers as a gift
to support you and your students on your faith journey."*

Carol Lemay, Superintendent

Chairman of the Board

Foreword

A Message from our Superintendent, Carol Lemay

In our busy lives, there is a great need for personal prayer and reflection. This book contains a rich blend of traditional prayers that will provide students and teachers alike great opportunity to expand their spiritual life through prayer. Thanks must go out to the Religious Education Committee for the production of this book and the opportunity for all of us to enrich our daily conversations with God.

*"I will listen to the whisper of God's Spirit in my ear,
And God will hear the longing in my heart."
Unknown*

A Message from Fr. Brian Inglis, Our Lady of the Foothills Catholic Church, Hinton

Jesus said, *"I am with you always."* But we know that we are not always with him; we are out busy about many things or occupied with ourselves. He said too, *"I call you friends."* So we can turn to him any time during the day and there he is -- a friend always with us.

Prayer is just that. When we pray, we turn to Jesus to speak to him, to listen, or just to be with Him for a while. The Father and the Holy Spirit are also with us always -- in fact, the Trinity dwells within us. We are never alone, nor need we ever think ourselves friendless and without support.

We turn to God to praise Him for his greatness, to thank Him for what he has done, to beg forgiveness for many things we have done or left undone, and to ask for what we need. Sometimes we use our own words, but it is helpful too to use words that have been given to us by God through the Church. In both cases it is important that the heart and mind be engaged, that we think of what we are saying and mean it deeply. Prayer is a heart to heart communication, from our heart to the heart of the Holy Trinity.

God is a good listener because he loves us. We will not be living completely as Christians -- or even as humans -- if we do not turn to him during the day, if we do not speak to him, if we ignore this great friend.

God, in his own words, is *"at the door knocking."* When we pray, we open the door and let him come into the place where we live.

Jesus often went off by himself to pray, and one day his disciples came to him and said, *"Lord, teach us to pray."* May the Lord teach us to pray; not just how to pray, but teach us to find time to turn away from the things that occupy us and turn to the One who is always at the door ... our friend who is always ready to listen, always ready to spend time with us, always ready to help us.

A Message from Fr. Patrick Baska, Sacred Heart Church, Edson

We are called to be people of prayer. Prayer is a gift of God. By it, we are gifted with a language of the heart that speaks directly to God's heart. Prayer is a heart-to-heart conversation with God whereby we first listen to God speak to us by opening our heart to His Word and then responding to that Word by living lives of faithfulness, love, and service. Prayer gives us the strength to keep on rowing through life's storms -- peer pressure, lost friendships, personal failures -- so that we will reach the safety of the shore. So keep on praying and keep on rowing.

Living Waters Catholic Regional District #42

The Naming of the School District

After hearing about the contest to name the new district formed by further regionalization, the idea came as a result of driving through the vast region and doing a bit of brainstorming with my husband, Joffre.

The word, 'water', came to mind very quickly due to the vast physical make-up of the geographic region, as well as many spiritual references in the Bible:

- ◆ The Athabasca River and its tributaries, including the McLeod and Pembina Rivers and the many smaller streams that link the wards of our Division: Hinton, Edson, Whitecourt, and Slave Lake.
- ◆ Lesser Slave Lake is a great body of water that caps our Division in the north.
- ◆ For exploration, the voyagers and settlers counted on these waters for access to this beautiful area.
- ◆ The lives of the Native population revolved around these waters for sustenance, travel and spiritual needs.
- ◆ As is mentioned in the bible, water is the symbol by which we are given Spiritual life.
- ◆ Life can only be sustained through the gift of water.

With the Blessing of the Water during the Easter Vigil, many references are made: *"In baptism we use your gift of water, in which you have made a rich symbol of the grace you give us in this sacrament. At the very dawn of creation your Spirit breathed on the waters, making them the wellspring of all holiness. The waters of the great flood you made a sign of the waters of baptism, that make an end of sin and a new beginning of goodness. Through the waters of the Red Sea you led Israel out of slavery ..."* (

In tying it all together, we think of God as the Living God, and it reminded me of the hymn, *"You are the voice of the Living God, calling us now to live in your love, to be children of God once again."*

In John 4: 10, Jesus speaks of water as life: *"If only you recognized God's gift, and who it is that is asking you for a drink, you would have asked him instead, and he would have given you living water."*

From this, the word '*living*' seemed to fit well with '*water*' and thus the name, "*Living Waters*", seemed a most fitting name for the new District, which suited the geographical area and expressed our spiritual and Catholic roots. The name was submitted to the Board and they must have agreed because this was the name that was chosen.

Rosella Plaquin
St. Mary Catholic School, Whitecourt

The Design of the District Logo

The following is a brief description of the symbols and colors used in my design. They reflect those descriptors used in the naming of our Division.

- ♦ WATER/WAVES/LAKE ... McLeod River, Pembina River, Slave Lake.
Water is used to symbolize the Spirit of God moving over the face of the earth -- cleansing, renewing and empowering all that is nourished by it. The re-creating power of the water and the Holy Spirit in baptism is also reflected in the waves and lake.
- ♦ CROSS/TEPEE ... Exploration and Native Population.
The cross is a symbol of Jesus' suffering, the gospel, and the source of our salvation. The cross was the means by which God defeated evil and restored the world from sin. It was a symbol used by early missionaries in bringing the Good News to the First Nation Peoples. The teepee symbolizes the dwellings of the native population and the "home" where the gospel is first heard by children from their parents.
- ♦ DOVE ... Spiritual.
The dove represents the Holy Spirit, the third member of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) present at baptism. It also symbolizes Jesus sending forth His followers to minister, teach, and empower others. The dove also stands for the Lord's indwelling presence and is a symbol of beauty, love, innocence, safety and prayer.
- ♦ MOUNTAINS/TREES/LEAF ... Physical.
Psalm 121: 1-2 states: *"I look to the mountains; where will my help come from? My help will come from the Lord, who made heaven and earth."* The mountains and trees represent the stretch of land that encompasses the Living Waters Division -- Hinton, Edson, Whitecourt, and Slave Lake -- over which God reigns. The trees symbolize the baptized child who can be compared to a shoot which the Lord has planted and cares for as it matures. The tree of life is made reference to -- conception, birth, baptism, confirmation, discipleship -- within the "forest" of God's church. The leaf shape is also a symbol of life and of the summer which is our pilgrimage on earth. In this journey, we are all to grow into Christ; we are to grow up in every way in the love of God.
- ♦ COLORS ... Blue, Yellow, White, Green, Violet.
 - Blue ... for water, sky, peace
 - Yellow ... for the sun (Son), warmth of God's love, light of Christ
 - White ... purity, baptism, confirmation, marriage
 - Green ... life's pilgrimage, new life, renewal
 - Violet ... royalty, the Church, God's family

Ed Meding
Gerard Redmond Catholic School, Hinton

Introduction

This book is intended as a guide to assist you with prayer in the classroom. It was developed by the Religious Studies Committee of the Living Waters Catholic Regional Division No. 42.

The Prayer Book is divided into three sections:

1. Prayers to introduce and 'master' at each grade level.
2. General information on prayer.
3. Suggestions from teachers as to how to implement prayer in the classroom.

This book is a living document. As you come upon pertinent and helpful information, simply add it to this Book of Prayers. We welcome your input and, if you have any information that could be included in this book and shared with District teachers, please forward it to your Religious Studies Committee representative.

"Oh what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer!"
Joseph Scriven

Words of Encouragement from the Religion Core Committee Members

Initially this book was simply to be a compilation of traditional prayers for our students to learn. The project grew to include other general information that may help or inspire us in praying with our students and, in so doing, imparting our Catholic faith and teaching them to pray.

In order for this book to make a difference to the faith life of your students, we suggest the following:

- ❖ This book has much to assist you. Familiarize yourself with all of its contents.
- ❖ Make a commitment to teaching your students the prescribed prayers in Chapter 1.
- ❖ Learn these prayers for yourself and for your own benefit.
- ❖ Inform parents of the prayers being taught in your grade, so that they may reinforce them at home.
- ❖ Work with your colleagues, and particularly your grade partners, to plan and provide prayer opportunities that are appropriate for your students.
- ❖ Know that, whether you are comfortable or not, you ARE the prayer leader in your classroom. Students will learn from your example. Take a risk ... pray together. Pray until you *are* comfortable.
- ❖ Start slowly ... but, for heaven's sake (quite literally), *start*. Give it your best effort ... and then leave the rest to God.
- ❖ Pray often and regularly.

*"Pray at all times,
be thankful in all circumstances.
This is what God wants from you in your life
in union with Christ Jesus."
1 Thessalonians 5: 17-18*

Dianne Buoy

Pam Jeck

Louis Kloster

Ed Meding

Tanya Vogrincic

"God eagerly awaits the chance
To bless the person whose heart is turned toward him."
Anonymous

Table of Contents

I. Recommended Prayers for Each Grade Level	1
Kindergarten	2
Grade One	3
Grade Two	4
Grade Three	5
Grade Four	6
Grade Five	8
Grade Six	9
Grade Seven	10
Grade Eight	12
Additional Prayers For Any Grade Level	15
The Rosary	

General Information on Prayer

A collection of articles and other information

- Articles on prayer by Archbishop Collins
- Meditative Prayer
- Using Scripture in Prayer
- Prayers of Petition
- Forms of Prayer
- Praying the Psalms
- Information from Mother Angelica
- Inspirational Writings on Prayer
- Bibliography of Some Books on Prayer
- Internet Resources

Prayer in the Classroom

Teacher submissions of effective prayer practices

- Kindergarten
- Grade One
- Grade Two
- Grade Three
- Grades Four to Six
- Grade Eight
- Grade Nine
- Grades Ten to Twelve

"Help me to work and pray, help me to live each day,
That all I do may say: Thy kingdom come."
A. B. Simpson

Recommended

Prayers

For Each

Grade Level

Recommended Prayers for Each Grade Level

It is important to us as Catholics and Christians to know the traditional prayers of our faith. In times of trouble, at times when we find it difficult to pray, or when we wish to pray together as a group, these memorized prayers become the mainstay of our prayer and a source of strength and unity. Some of them are prayers that are part of the Mass; many are daily prayers.

These prayers have been 'assigned' to a grade level, and by the end of that year, students should be able to recite these selected prayers by memory. This does not mean that prayers, such as the Rosary, can not be introduced in earlier grades. Certainly, these prayers should not be restricted to a particular year but should be said every year after they have been memorized. For example, grace before and/or after meals should be routine whether students be in Grade one or in Grade eight.

These traditional prayers have been provided here for you to teach and use with your students. They can easily be made into transparencies or copied on poster paper. The important thing is that they be prayed ... regularly. As it is with any learning, practice and repetition are necessary. In so doing, prayer becomes part of the everyday classroom routine for you and your students.

Kindergarten	Sign of the Cross Grace before and after meals
Grade One	Our Father Hail Mary Guardian Angel Prayer
Grade Two	Holy, Holy, Holy (Mass) Memorial Acclamation (Mass) Lamb of God (Mass)
Grade Three	Act of Contrition Last part of the Creed Morning Offering
Grade Four	Psalm 23 The Apostles' Creed Penitential Rite (Mass)
Grade Five	Fatima Prayer Hail Holy Queen
Grade Six	Act of Faith Act of Hope Act of Love
Grade Seven	The Jesus Prayer Come Holy Spirit The Angelus

Grade Eight

The Gloria
The Nicene Creed
The Stations of the Cross

Students in Grades Nine through Twelve would be expected to know these prayers and to use them during prayer times.

These prayers can become part of your daily prayer. There's no designated time for prayer, but opportunities for prayer need to be provided, whether it be first thing in the morning or afternoon or at the very end of the day.

In order for prayer to be incorporated into the daily life of our students, it needs to be given importance and practice in all classes. In some Catholic schools, every class begins with a brief prayer. In this way, prayer and faith permeate all subject areas. Prayer -- communication with God -- is best not limited to a particular time or place.

"No matter what may be the test,
God will take care of you;
Lean, weary one, upon His breast;
God will take care of you."
C. D. Martin

"Prayer is exhaling the spirit of man and inhaling the Spirit of God."
Edwin Keith

Kindergarten

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit,

Amen.

Grace before Meals

Bless us, O Lord,
and these your gifts
which we are about to receive
from your bounty
through Christ, Our Lord,
Amen.

Grace After Meals

We give you thanks, Almighty God,
for all Your benefits, which we have received
through Christ, Our Lord.
Amen.

"He who has learned to pray
has learned the greatest secret of a holy and happy life."
William Law

Grade One

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, Who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
As it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us;
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. Amen.

The Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you;
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The Guardian Angel Prayer

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
Ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.
Amen.

"He went up a hill by himself to pray.
When evening came, Jesus was there alone."
Matthew 14: 23

Grade Two

Mass Parts: Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy, Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are filled with your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.

Mass Parts: Memorial Acclamation

Christ has died;
Christ is risen;
Christ will come again.

Mass Parts: Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world,
grant us peace.

"What a friend we have in Jesus; all our sins and grief to bear!
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer."
Joseph Scriven

Grade Three

Act of Contrition

O, my God,
I am heartily sorry for having offended you,
and I detest all my sins
because of Your just punishments,
but most of all because they offend You, my God,
who are all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace,
to sin no more
and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed (Third part)

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of Saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

Morning Prayer

O Jesus, through the Most Pure Heart of Mary,
I offer you my prayers, works and sufferings of this day
in reparation for my sins.

"We must pray for more prayer, for it is the world's mightiest healing force."
Frank C. Laubach

Grade Four

The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And life everlasting. Amen.

Mass Parts: Penitential Rite

I confess to almighty God
And to you my brothers and sisters,
that I have sinned through my own fault ...
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do.
And I ask blessed Mary, ever virgin,
all the angels and saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.

"Many words do not a good friend make;
what counts is the heartfelt desire to commune with God
and the faith to back it up."
Anonymous

Grade Four (continued)

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pasture.
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul.
He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness
for his name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death,
I will fear no evil.
For thou art with me.
Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me
in the presence of my enemies.
Thou anointest my head with oil.
My cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life.
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

"Prayer is not merely an occasional impulse
to which we respond when we are in trouble;
prayer is a life attitude."
Walter A. Mueller

Grade Five

Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus,
forgive us our sins.
Save us from the fires of hell.
Lead all souls to heaven,
especially those most in need of Thy mercy.

Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, holy queen, Mother of mercy,
Our life, our sweetness, and our hope.
To you we cry, poor banished children of Eve;
To you we send up our sighs,
Mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.
Turn then, O most gracious advocate,
Your eyes of mercy towards us,
And after this our exile,
Show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet virgin Mary.
Pray for us,
O holy Mother of God.

"Prayer is a strong wall and fortress of the church;
It is a goodly Christian weapon."
Martin Luther

Grade Six

An Act of Faith

O, my God,
I most firmly believe in you
and all you have revealed to your Holy Catholic Church,
because you are truth itself
and can neither deceive nor be deceived. Amen.

An Act of Hope

O, my God,
Relying on your promises
and upon the merits of Jesus Christ,
My Savior,
I most firmly hope in you
and trust that you will grant me the grace
to observe your commandments in this world
and will reward me in the next. Amen.

An Act of Love

O, my God,
You are worthy of all my love
and infinite in every perfection;
I love you with my whole heart,
and I love my neighbor as myself for love of you. Amen.

"Pray always; pray, and never faint; pray, without ceasing. Pray."
Charles Wesley

Grade Seven

The Jesus Prayer

Lord, Jesus Christ,
Son of God,
Have mercy on me, a sinner.

Come Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of Your faithful
and enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created,
And You shall renew the face of the earth.
O God, who has instructed the hearts of Your faithful
By the light of the Holy Spirit,
Grant that by the same Holy Spirit,
we may have a right judgment in all things
and evermore rejoice in His consolations.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

"Seven days without prayer makes one weak."
Allen E. Bartlett

Grade Seven (continued)

The Angelus

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary ...

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R. Be it done unto me according to Thy word.

Hail Mary ...

V. And the Word was made flesh,

R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary ...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord,

Thy grace into our hearts;

That we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ Thy Son

was made known by the message of an angel,

may by His passion and Cross

be brought to the glory of His Resurrection.

Through the same Christ our Lord.

Amen.

"When you go to your knees,
God will help you stand up to anything."
Anonymous

Grade Eight

Mass Parts: The Gloria

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King,
Almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ,
Only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father;
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

Grade Eight (continued)

The Nicene Creed

We believe in God, the Father, the almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God for God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
One in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
He came down from heaven:
By the power of the Holy Spirit
He was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered, died, and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in fulfilment of the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit,
The Lord, the Giver of Life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Grade Eight (continued)

The Stations of the Cross

The following are the traditional Stations of the Cross:

- I. Jesus is Condemned to Die
- II. Jesus Takes His Cross
- III. Jesus Falls the First Time
- IV. Jesus Meets His Grieving Mother
- V. Simon Helps Jesus Carry His Cross
- VI. Veronica Wipes the Face of Jesus
- VII. Jesus Falls the Second Time
- VIII. Jesus Speaks to the Women
- IX. Jesus Falls the Third Time
- X. Jesus is Stripped of His Garments
- XI. Jesus is Nailed to the Cross
- XII. Jesus Dies on the Cross
- XIII. Jesus is Taken From the Cross
- XIV. Jesus is Placed in the Tomb
- XV. Jesus is Raised From the Dead

The Sacred Congregation of Divine Worship recommends that the traditional Stations be revised to emphasize that the sufferings and resurrection of Christ are one redemptive mystery. The following is the revised Way of the Cross. A complete prayer service for these Stations can be found at the back of the annual Living with Christ missalettes.

- I. The Last Supper
- II. In the Garden of Gethsemane
- III. Before the Sanhedrin
- IV. Before Pontius Pilate
- V. The Whipping and Crowning with Thorns
- VI. The Carrying of the Cross
- VII. Simon of Cyrene
- VIII. The Women of Jerusalem
- IX. The Stripping and Crucifixion
- X. The Second Thief
- XI. Mary and John
- XII. Death on the Cross
- XIII. The New Sepulchre
- XIV. The Resurrection

Additional Prayers to Use at any Grade Level

Mary's Rosary

Praying the rosary is a way to honor Mary. The rosary beads are used to keep count of the prayers and mysteries.

The rosary is divided into three sets of stories: The Joyful Mysteries, The Sorrowful Mysteries, and The Glorious Mysteries. Each set consists of five mysteries and a decade of the rosary is prayed with each. Mysteries are stories to meditate upon and think about while praying.

The first five decades are called the Joyful Mysteries. They cover five joyful events in the life of Jesus and Mary. The second group, the Sorrowful Mysteries, consists of five sorrowful events related to the death of Jesus. The final group, the Glorious Mysteries, recalls five glorious events in the life of Jesus and Mary.

Praying the Rosary

1. The Sign of the Cross. (Begin on the bead directly above the cross on the short section of the rosary. Each time you pray a new prayer, move to the bead directly beside the one you have just finished holding.)
2. The Apostles' Creed
3. Our Father
4. Hail Mary – three times, praying for an increase in faith, hope, and charity
5. Glory be to the Father
6. Recall the first mystery.
7. Our Father
8. Hail Mary – ten times while meditating on the Mystery.
9. Glory be to the Father
10. Fatima Prayer (This completes the decade.)
11. Announce the second mystery.
12. Repeat steps 7, 8, 9, and 10.
13. Announce the third mystery.
14. Repeat steps 7, 8, 9, and 10.
15. Announce the fourth mystery.
16. Repeat steps 7, 8, 9, and 10.
17. Announce the fifth mystery.
18. Repeat steps 7, 8, 9, and 10.
19. Hail, Holy Queen
20. Sign of the Cross.
(The cross may be kissed as a sign of reverence.)

The Mysteries

The **Joyful Mysteries** are said on Mondays and Thursdays, as well as on the first Sunday of Advent and the first Sunday of Lent. (The words in brackets beside each mystery show the practical applications to our daily lives.)

1. The Annunciation
The messenger of God announces to Mary that she is to be the mother of God. (Humility)
2. The Visitation
Mary visits and helps her cousin Elizabeth. (Love of neighbor)
3. The Birth of the Child Jesus
Mary gives birth to Jesus in a stable in Bethlehem. (Spirit of Poverty)
4. The Presentation of Jesus in the Temple
Jesus is presented in the temple. (Obedience to God's Will)
5. The Finding of Jesus in the Temple
Jesus is found in the temple. (Fidelity to Vocation)

The **Sorrowful Mysteries** are said on Tuesdays and Fridays and also on Sundays during Lent.

1. The Agony of Jesus in the Garden
Jesus undergoes his agony in the garden of Olives. (Spirit of Prayer)
2. The Scourging of Jesus at the Pillar
Jesus is scourged at the pillar. (Modesty and Purity)
3. The Crowning of Jesus with Thorns
Jesus is crowned with thorns. (Courage)
4. Jesus Carries His Heavy Cross
Jesus carries the cross the Calvary. (Patience in Suffering)
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Jesus
Jesus dies on the cross for our sins. (Self-denial)

The **Glorious Mysteries** are said on Wednesdays and Saturdays and also on Sundays from Easter to Advent.

1. The Resurrection of Jesus
Jesus rises from the dead. (Faith)
2. The Ascension of Jesus into heaven
Jesus ascends to heaven. (Hope)
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit comes to the apostles and the Blessed Mary. (Wisdom, Love, Zeal, Fortitude)
4. The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
The Mother of Jesus is taken into heaven. (Eternal Happiness)
5. The Crowning of Mary as Queen of heaven
Mary is the crowned queen of heaven and earth. (Devotion to Mary and Final Perseverance.)

Prayers

Sign of the Cross

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord;
He was conceived by power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary;
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
He descended to the dead; the third day He arose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father;
He shall come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us,
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Fatima Prayer

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fire of hell.
Lead all souls to heaven, especially those most in need of Thy mercy.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy!
Hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope!
To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve.
To you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears!

Turn then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy towards us;
and after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus.
O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Note: Prayers are written in traditional format (using words such as art, thy, etc.) but may be prayed using modern language.

When to Focus on the Rosary

May - month of Mary
October - month of the Rosary

Religion Unit Plan - The Rosary

- I. History of the Rosary
 - A. St. Dominic
 - B. St. Bernadette
 - C. Children of Fatima
- II. Prayers of the Rosary
 - A. Sign of the Cross
 - B. Apostles' Creed
 - C. Our Father
 - D. Hail Mary
 - E. Glory be
 - F. Fatima Prayer
 - G. Hail, Holy Queen
- III. Praying the Rosary
 - A. Order of the Prayers
 - B. Mysteries
 - 1. Joyful
 - 2. Sorrowful
 - 3. Glorious

For more information, please contact Bridget McAndrews at Vanier School.

Rosary Prayers

Note: Making overhead transparencies of the following prayers may be helpful in teaching your students.

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
And born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
And is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

**I believe in the Holy spirit,
The holy catholic Church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.**

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.
Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus.

**Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.**

OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done.
On earth as it is in heaven.

**Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our trespasses,
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil. Amen.**

GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father and to the Son,
And to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be
World without end. Amen.**

FATIMA PRAYER

O my Jesus, forgive us our sins,
Save us from the fires of hell.
Lead all souls to heaven,
Especially those most in need of your mercy.

Other Prayers

God is good;
God is great.
Let us thank him for our food.
By his hands we all are fed,
Thank you, Lord
For our daily bread.
Amen

.....

First the seed
And then the grain;
Thank you, God,
For sun and rain.
First the flour
And then the bread;
Thank you, God
That we are fed.
Thank you, God,
For all your care;
Help us all to share and share.
Amen

.....

Good morning, Dear Jesus
This day is for You.
We ask You to bless
All we think, say and do.
Amen

Thank you for the friends we meet
Thank you for the food we eat
Thank you for the birds that sing
Thank you God for everything.
Amen

.....

A Lenten Grace

Lord, help me to remember
As I eat bread thankfully,
That there are many who have no bread
And no fresh water.

As I breathe air joyfully,
There are those who breathe only pollution;
As I study and learn freely,
Many are denied a proper education;
And as I live life fully
Many will die before nightfall.

Lord, help me to remember,
And having remembered, to care.
Amen

"If we do not love one another,
we certainly will not have much power with God in prayer."
Dwight L. Moody

An Indian Prayer

O Great Spirit,
Whose voice I hear in the winds,
And whose breath gives life to all the world,
Hear me.

I am a man before you,
one of your many children.
I am small and I am weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.

Let me walk in beauty
and make my eyes ever behold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made,
my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise,
so that I may know the things you have taught my people –
The lesson you have hidden in every leaf and rock.

I seek strength, not to be superior to my brothers,
but to be able to fight my greatest enemy – myself.
Make me ever ready to come to you
with clean hands and straight eyes,
so when life fades as a fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you without shame.
Amen.

PRAAYER

in the

CLASSROOM

Teachers in the Living Waters School Division were asked to share activities they use to enhance prayer in their classrooms. Please use and adapt these prayer ideas to suit the individual needs of your class.

"... The first purpose of prayer is to know God."
Charles E. Allen

Kindergarten:

Children need to understand that there are many forms of prayer and that they take place in a variety of formal and informal settings. There are times to have more of a ritual with the lighting of candles and dimming of lights. For meditation, the lights are dimmed, a candle is lit, and the children find a comfortable place to lay on the carpet. They are sometimes allowed to have a stuffed animal to cuddle with. On these occasions soft instrumental music is played in the background.

Prayer time activities:

- ◆ Begin each day with prayer circle reciting a traditional prayer such as The Sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary
- ◆ Recite a Prayer of the Month
- ◆ Poem to begin prayer time...Our hands will fold, our heads will bow, we're ready to talk to God now.
- ◆ Prayers said or sung before snack and at other appropriate times
- ◆ Informal prayer before fieldtrips
- ◆ Intentions upon hearing the news of illness or death in a family

Resources:

An excellent reference book for meditation is **In My Heart Room. Book Two(More Loving Prayers for Children)** by Mary Terese Donze, A.S.C.

"... One of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray."
Luke 11:1

Grade One:

The Grade One Religion Program concentrates on two main prayers - Our Father and the Hail Mary.

Prayer time activities:

- ◆ "Blessing Song" sung over each child who is celebrating a birthday
- ◆ In the Fall when completing the "Apple Unit", learn the Johnny Appleseed prayer
- ◆ Daily grace
- ◆ After the Lord's Prayer recite a children's morning prayer

Resources:

1. Children's Everyday Prayers
2. When All The World's Asleep
3. A Children's Book of Poems and Prayers.

"Time spent in prayer is never wasted."
Francois Fenelon

Grade Two:

Prayer time activities:

- ◆ Light candles
- ◆ Students orally share concerns or people's names that can be included in morning prayer
- ◆ Morning prayer
- ◆ Lunch prayer
- ◆ Silent time prayer

"Prayer, in its simplest definition, is merely a wish turned God-ward."
Phillips Brooks

Grade Three:

A basic guideline to prayer taken from "The Workbook of Living Prayer" by Maxie Dunnam:

1. Adoration - God's greatness
2. Confession - review of the day (or time past)
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication - persons and situations of concern brought before God

Prayer time activities:

- ◆ Often begin Religion class by lighting a candle, turning off the lights and having silent prayer. Children are invited to share prayer concerns and we practice the proper response:
"For this I pray to the Lord." "Lord, hear our prayer."
- ◆ Prayer corner available with pillow so that at any time children can pray quietly on their own.
- ◆ Morning prayer, lunch prayer and home time prayer that change monthly. (These prayers are often taken from the yearly prayer books ordered for each grade to use).
- ◆ Each day a student is chosen to lead the class in prayer.
- ◆ In spring each student is assigned a specific day to prepare and share a grace with the class. These are neatly written on a piece of paper and collected into a class "Book of Graces".
- ◆ During the Lord's Prayer students are invited to hold hands with those on the left and the right.

"Let prayer be the key of the day and the bolt of the night."
Jean Paul Richter

Prayer activities for Grades 4 to 6

- ◆ Each Friday the students copy a prayer neatly onto a piece of paper and illustrate the prayer. These prayers are collected and saved until May. A Table of Contents is made and the prayers are all collected into a Prayer Book for the child to give to their mother for Mother's Day.
- ◆ On each of the Saint Days, the Saint was studied and a history of the saint learned.

The Saints: Our Models and Heroes

A supplement to the
Living Waters Catholic Prayer Book

Presented to
the teachers of Living Waters Catholic Regional Division #42
on behalf of the Board of Trustees

September 2002

Introduction

Did you know ... ?

- that a saint is one that is 'holy'. There are, therefore, saints in heaven as well as on earth. Anyone is a saint if he or she is, in some sense, holy. Within the Catholic Church, anyone who is baptized is a saint (with a small 's') as we have already been partially sanctified. In our Church history, however, individuals have been recognized for their holiness. Saints like Saint Patrick are people we admire and respect. As Christians, we are all saints. Depending on what we do with our lives, we are also 'saints in the making'.
- that the Catholic Church does not know exactly how many saints there are. By the end of the first century, Christians were honoring other Christians who had died. Until the ninth century, however, there was no formal process of canonization. People were believed to be saints if they had been martyred for the faith. There may be up to 5000 saints, although we will never know for sure.
- John Baptist de la Salle is the patron saint of teachers.
- We pray *with* saints, not to them. Just as we might ask someone – perhaps a friend, family member, or someone close to God – to pray for us when we are in need, we can ask the saints to pray for our particular concerns.
- Saints are recognized on specific days of the year, called 'feast days'. There are at least three saints for almost every day of the year.
- The Church chooses its saints carefully through a process called *canonization*. The process begins after the death of a Catholic person whom people believe to be holy. Sometimes this is many years later or, as in the case of Mother Teresa of Calcutta, shortly after their death. The local bishop usually begins an investigation into the life and death of the individual. Vatican theologians then evaluate the evidence and pass it on to another group of authorities known as the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. If approved, the pope proclaims the individual as 'venerable'. The next step is 'beatification', but it requires evidence that one miracle has been attributed to the individual after his or her death and as a result of a specific petition. The pope then declares the person as 'blessed'. If another miracle is attributed to the individual, he or she is 'canonized'. From then on, the person is believed to have lived a holy life, to be in heaven, and to be honored by the universal Church. (More information can be found at <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/02364b.htm>.)
- The communion of saints refers to ALL the baptized, those who are alive now and those who have departed and now live with Christ in heaven.
- You are called by God to be a saint.

Interesting stuff??? Indeed, there is much more to learn about saints. Besides learning about saints, we can also ask them to pray for us and to intercede on our behalf.

(continued on next page)

This supplement to the prayer book is provided to assist you as you teach your students about the saints. It was developed by the Religious Studies Committee of the Living Waters Catholic Regional Division No. 42.

The Saints supplement is divided into three sections:

1. Profiles of saints
2. General information on saints
3. Suggestions from teachers as to how to engage students in learning about saints.

Like the prayer book, this section on the saints is a living document. As you come upon pertinent and helpful information or activities, simply insert it into your binder. We welcome your input and, if you have any information that could be included in this book and shared with District teachers, please forward it to your Religious Studies Committee representative.

In order for this book to make a difference to the faith life of your students, we suggest the following:

- ❖ Familiarize yourself with all of its contents. This book has much to assist you.
- ❖ Make a commitment to teaching your students about the saints.
- ❖ Work with your colleagues, and particularly your grade partners, to plan and provide opportunities that are appropriate for your students.
- ❖ Pray to the saints often and regularly.

Cara Block

Michel Despins

Shauna Despins

Pam Jeck

Louis Kloster

Ed Meding

Debbie Medinski

Rona Melanson

Angela Nickolson

Tanya Vogrincic

PRAYER FOR THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

For all the saints who went before us,
who have spoken to our hearts,
and touched us with your fire,
we praise you, O God.

For all the saints who live beside us,
whose weaknesses and strengths
are woven into our own,
we praise you, O God.

For all the saints who live beyond us,
who challenge us
to change the world with them,
we praise you, O God.
Amen.

Author Unknown

Table of Contents

I.	Profiles of the Saints	1
	A List of Saints and Their Feast Days by Month	2
	Saint Agatha	4
	Saint Aloysius Gonzaga	5
	Saint Ambrose	6
	Saint Andrew the Apostle	7
	Saint Anthony Mary Claret	8
	Saint Anthony of Padua	9
	Saint Barbara	10
	Saint Barnabas	11
	Saint Benedict Joseph Labre	12
	Saint Blasé	13
	Saint Bridget of Ireland	14
	Saint Catherine Laboure	15
	Saint Catherine of Siena	16
	Saint Cecilia	17
	Saint Elizabeth of Hungary	18
	Saint Eugene de Mazenod	19
	Saint Frances of Rome	20
	Saint Francis of Assisi	21
	Saint Francis Xavier	22
	Saint Gemma Galgani	23
	Saint George	24
	Saint Gregory the Great	25
	Saint Ignatius of Antioch	26
	Saint Isaac Jogue	27
	Saint Jerome Emiliani	28
	Saint Joan of Arc	29
	Saint John of Damascus	30
	Saint John of the Cross	31
	Saint John the Baptist	32
	Saint Joseph	33
	Saint Jude Thaddeus	34
	Saint Justin Martyr	35
	Saint Lawrence Ruiz	36
	Saint Leo the Great	37
	Saint Lucy	38
	Saint Luke the Evangelist	39
	Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque	40
	Saint Margaret of Scotland	41
	Saint Marguerite d'Youville	42
	Saint Mark the Evangelist	43
	Saint Martin de Porres	44
	Saint Mary the Blessed Virgin	45
	Saint Matthew the Apostle	46
	Saint Matthias	47
	Saint Michael the Archangel	48

Saint Nicholas of Myra	49
Saint Patrick	50
Saint Paul of the Cross	51
Saint Paul	52
Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicity	53
Saint Peter Damian	54
Saint Peter	55
Saint Rita	56
Saint Scholastica	57
Saint Teresa of Avila	58
Saint Therese of the Child Jesus	59
Saint Thomas More	60
Saint Timothy	61
Saint Valentine	62
Saint Vincent de Paul	63
Saint Vincent Ferrer	64
Saint Wenceslaus	65

II. General Information on Prayer 66

A collection of articles and other information	
<i>Patron Saints</i> (A comprehensive list)	
<i>Teaching Mary and the Saints</i> (Catechist, April/May 2000)	
<i>The Communion of Saints Today</i> (Religion Teacher's Journal, Oct. 1999)	
<i>Surrounded By the Saints</i> (Religion Teacher's Journal, Oct. 1999)	
<i>Jubilee Time is Near</i> (Religion Teacher's Journal, Oct. 1999)	
<i>Making Holy Cards</i> (from web site: http://domestic-church.com)	
<i>Easy Saint's Costumes for Halloween</i>	
<i>All Saint's Party Ideas</i>	
<i>Holy Card Shrines</i>	
<i>Celebrating Saint's Feast Days</i>	
<i>Celebrating with the Saints</i> (Religion Teacher's Journal, Oct. 1999)	
<i>We Journey with the Saints</i> (prayer service)	
<i>Honoring All the Saints: A Prayer Service</i> (Catechist, Oct. 2000)	
<i>New Saints Prayer Service</i> (Catechist, Oct. 2001)	
Litany of the Saints	
Bibliography of Some Books on the Saints	102
Internet Sites	104

III. Saints in the Classroom 106

Teacher submissions of effective practices	107
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Profiles of the Saints

List of Saints and Their Feast Days by Month

September

September 3	Saint Gregory the Great
September 21	Saint Matthew the Apostle
September 27	Saint Vincent de Paul
September 28	Saint Lawrence Ruiz
September 28	Saint Wenceslaus
September 29	Saint Michael the Archangel

October

October 1	Saint Therese of the Child Jesus
October 4	Saint Francis of Assisi
October 15	Saint Teresa of Avila
October 16	Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque
October 16	Saint Marguerite d'Youville
October 17	Saint Ignatius of Antioch
October 18	Saint Luke the Evangelist
October 19	Saint Isaac Jogue
October 19	Saint Paul of the Cross
October 24	Saint Anthony Mary Claret
October 28	Saint Jude Thaddeus

November

November 3	Saint Martin de Porres
November 10	Saint Leo the Great
November 16	Saint Margaret of Scotland
November 17	Saint Elizabeth of Hungary
November 22	Saint Cecilia
November 25	Saint Catherine Laboure
November 30	Saint Andrew the Apostle

December

December 3	Saint Francis Xavier
December 4	Saint Barbara
December 4	Saint John of Damascus
December 6	Saint Nicholas of Myra
December 7	Saint Ambrose
December 13	Saint Lucy
December 14	Saint John of the Cross

January

January 1	Saint Mary the Blessed Virgin
January 26	Saint Timothy

February

February 1	Saint Bridget of Ireland
February 3	Saint Blasé
February 5	Saint Agatha
February 8	Saint Jerome Emiliani
February 10	Saint Scholastica
February 14	Saint Valentine
February 21	Saint Peter Damian

March

March 7	Saints Perpetua and Saint Felicity
March 9	Saint Frances of Rome
March 17	Saint Patrick
March 19	Saint Joseph

April

April 5	Saint Vincent Ferrer
April 11	Saint Gemma Galgani
April 16	Saint Benedict Joseph Labre
April 23	Saint George
April 25	Saint Mark the Evangelist
April 29	Saint Catherine of Siena

May

May 14	Saint Matthias
May 21	Saint Eugene de Mazenod
May 22	Saint Rita
May 30	Saint Joan of Arc

June

June 1	Saint Justin Martyr
June 11	Saint Barnabas
June 13	Saint Anthony of Padua
June 21	Saint Aloysius Gonzaga
June 22	Saint Thomas More
June 24	Saint John the Baptist
June 29	Saint Paul
June 29	Saint Peter

General Information on Saints

Bibliography of Some Books on Saints

Ball, Ann; Modern Saints: Their Lives and Faces,

- Written for Catholic students and educators, by a school teacher, these books detail the lives of saints and holy individuals of the last 200 years. Their amazing stories are told in an easy-

to-read style with numerous anecdotes and pictures. Read about their challenges and setbacks, their trials and triumphs, their dedication and determination.

Costello, Gwen; Praying with the Saints

- Consisting of thirty (30) classroom services for children, this resource is appropriate for Grades 3 - 12. Each service introduces us to a particular saint and provides a two or three minute prayer service. There is very little preparation required. Ideas for prayer and action responses as well as optional activities are also provided. (Available in District library)

Glavich, Kathleen; Saints for Children;

- Available through Twenty-Third Publications (1-800-321-0411) or through Universal Church Supplies in Edmonton (1800-790-7999)

Neuberger, Anne E.; Stories of Saints through the Centuries; Twenty-third Publications
(1-800-321-0411)

Nussbaum, Melissa Musick; Winter Saints: Stories for the Days of Advent and Christmas

- Students are introduced to the 'communion of saints' through this delightful collection of short stories. Each day during Advent and Christmas, starting with November 26 (the beginning of the Advent season) and ending on January 6 (the feast of the Epiphany), you can share a story and teach the students about a saint. A timeline and a world map are provided so that students can get a sense of when and where these saints lived. (Available in District library)

Schreiber, Gayle; Saints Alive: Stories and Activities for Young Children

- Primary students will enjoy these stories and activities. Thirty (30) saints are featured on their respective feast days during the year. Information is brief and simply-stated. With every saint, a simple and appropriate activity is provided. A short prayer is provided for each saint. (Available in District library)

Snyder, Bernadette McCarver; 115 Saintly Fun Facts,

Walsh, Michael; The Book of Saints; Twenty-third Publications (1-800-321-0411)

Welborn, Amy; Book of Saints

- An excellent resource, written for middle school children, it answers the question "What is a saint?" Students learn that some saints were strong leaders, others loved children, and others helped people in ordinary ways. Well-organized, it provides child-friendly information on over two hundred saints. (Available in District library)

Zyromski, Page McKean, Echo Stories for Children: Celebrating Saints and Seasons in Word and Action, Twenty-Third Publications

- This is an excellent book for catechists, especially at the elementary level, as it gets students involved and learning. It contains 22 stories, some about saints, that teachers can tell their students. The story is told in brief phrases which the children repeat. Each line is pantomimed using a simple gesture. Students copy those actions as well.

Internet Sites for Saints

There are many interesting sites on the Internet with information about saints. Some are listed below. The Monks of Adoration, who have written a book entitled [Catholics on the Internet](#)

provide a list of about fifty sites with information on this topic. You can find this list at www.monksfadoration.org. Search for 'Saints'.

<http://saints.catholic.org/index.shtml>

Catholic Online Saints and Angels is the largest collection of facts and information concerning saints and angels on the Internet. Its exhaustive list of saints and angels includes biographical information, artwork, and traditional prayers. Saints can be sorted by name, feast day, patronage, or ethnicity.

www.catholic-forum.com/saints/indexsnt.htm

The Patron Saints Index is an excellent site boasting an index of 3730 saints. It lists the patron saints of countries, places, professions, occupations, and social and medical conditions. This is a long and detailed list with links to saints and their biographies. This site also provides answers to frequently-asked questions like: "How does one become a saint?"

www.catholic-forum.com/saints/

This is an excellent site boasting an index of 3730 saints with comprehensive biographies. Patron saints are grouped in a variety of ways including feast days, animals, location, and others.

www.americancatholic.org/Features/SaintofDay

The Saint of the Day site highlights a different saint for every day of the year. You could begin your day by introducing the day's saint and then include the saint's virtues in prayer time.

www.carr.lib.md.us/stjohn/saints.htm

This is the St. Lawrence Roman Catholic Resource Site in Westminster, Maryland. There are several biographies on saints.

www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/Senate/6275/saints.html

The Living the Word Hagiography Index groups saints according to various categories, such as family life; sports and hobbies; animals and nature; health and fitness; and the world around us. Students will enjoy finding out the particular saints related to their interests, or national origin.

<http://members.aol.com/blfrdamien/saints.htm>

Patricia's World of Catholic Saints and Holy Witnesses is a site which includes information from the Catechism of the Catholic Church on saints. There are also biographies of other extraordinary people who have not been officially recognized as saints.

www.sch.edu/theolibrary/saints2.htm

The Spring Hill College theology library has a comprehensive collection of biographies on individual saints.

www.wau.org

Saints page for the publication, *The Word Among Us*

www.vatican.va

Causes of Saints (click on Roman Curia and Congregations)

<http://domestic-church.com> (Click on Saints)

Saints biographies are written for young children, older children and families.

<http://users.erols.com/saintpat/ss/ss-index.htm>

This site contains brief descriptions of saints that were researched and written by students.

www.cathcom.net

A very comprehensive list of saints

www.newadvent.org/cathen/

Besides some biographies on the saints, one will find general information on saints including the process of beatification and canonization

www.wcr.ab.ca

The Western Catholic Reporter maintains a web site that provides information on a number of topics including 'Saints'.

Suggestions for Teaching Children about Saints

Saints in the Classroom
Teacher Submissions of Effective Practices

At the beginning of the month, introduce the various saints. Give a brief introduction about each. Let the class vote on their favorite saint. This will be the saint to be studied for the month. At the end of the year, the students will know about ten saints in detail.

Rona Melanson, Grade 1
St. Mary School, Whitecourt

On November 1 (All Saints Day), the students in our school dressed up as their favorite saint. The morning was routine. In the afternoon the students were put into groups with ages K – 8 in every group. They then rotated through a series of stations. Each teacher was responsible for choosing a Saint and then coming up with an activity to go with it. At the end of the day the school participated in a liturgy with an All Saints theme. Most of the teachers took activities from the book, Saints for Children by Kathleen Glavich. Here is a list of some of the stations the teachers had:

- Music ... Students made music shakers out of toilet rolls or paper plates. They then learned the song, "When the Saints Come Marching In".
- St. Anthony ... The group discussed St. Anthony and completed a word search (St. Anthony is the Patron Saint of lost articles.) Students, old and young, worked collaboratively. They also participated in a hunt in the classroom looking for different objects and words.
- St. Francis ... They discussed his background. They then took off their shoes and went outside to smell the air, feel the sand between their toes, etc. They then gave thanks for all of God's creatures. After they came in, they colored a picture of a famous bird that always sat on St. Anthony's shoulder.
- St. Lucia ... Again, the class discussed her life and read her story. They made a crown of lights to wear on their heads.
- St. Elizabeth Seton ... The group read about her life and did an activity described in the book, Saints for Children.
- St. Joan of Arc ... The group talked about her life and looked at a picture with her wearing her armor. They then discussed the scripture passage that describes the armor of the Lord (Ephesians 6: 14 – 20). The students then put on some armor (shield, helmet, sword, breastplate, etc.) that was purchased at Wal-Mart.
- Numerous Saints ... Students talked about many saints and learned more about their patron saint. The students then traced their bodies and drew symbols that represented the saints that were important to them.
- St. Andrew ... After discussing his life, the students drew and colored a fish, a symbol of the early Christians.

On October 31, my class had an All Saints Party. All through the month of October, we learned about a saint each day. I had posters made up of most of them. We discussed each saint and then said a short prayer to each of them. On the day of our party we had the Joan of Arc relay race. We also played musical chairs to the song, "When the Saints Come Marching In." We concluded with a liturgy. We had a lot of fun with it. I hope you do too.

Laurie Bradford
Former teacher at GRCCS

Other ideas:

- Have students research a saint, perhaps their patron saint. This would be an excellent way of gaining experience on the Internet and practising their computer skills.
- Select a saint to focus on each week. Give students information about the saint and a saintly virtue to imitate that week.

- Read the article entitled “Jubilee Time is Near” in Section II. It describes a number of ways in which you can bring the saints alive in your class.
- On Halloween or on November 1 (All Saints Day), plan a party that includes games and a scavenger hunt on the theme of saints. Students could ‘introduce’ themselves to the rest of the class by giving a brief synopsis of their life.
- On each day of the week, provide a clue for the saint of the week. Students guess who it might be. On the Friday, the saint is revealed.
- Use a liturgical calendar with the feast days of the saints.
- Create a Saint of the Month bulletin board in your classroom or in the hallway. You could feature information about a particular saint and about saints in general.
- Announce the feast days of noteworthy saints on the intercom as part of morning announcements. Some information could be given about the life of each saint on his or her feast day. Acknowledge those students and staff who are named after that saint.
- Refer to the article, “Celebrating with the Saints” in Section II. It describes wonderful ways of learning about the saints, including a Saint Prayer Chain, Saint Statue Search, Saint Parade, and Saints Songs and Videos.

LITANY OF THE SAINTS

Introduction

Leader: The saints are recognized for their deep faith in God and their Christian example. They not only listened to the Word of God but they obeyed and loved it. Some saints helped the poor and the sick. Others spent their lives telling others about the love of God and the peace of Christ. God invites us into a close relationship with Him, and God gave us the saints so we could follow their example. Each of us is a 'saint in the making'. We can pray to the saints anytime, asking them to pray for us whenever we need help.

In our prayers this morning, we would like to ask the saints in heaven to pray for us.

Leader:

◆ Let us begin: In the name of the Father ... (Sign of the Cross)

◆ Please repeat after me.

Leader: Lord, have mercy

All: Lord, have mercy

Leader: Christ, have mercy

All: Christ, have mercy

Leader: Lord, have mercy

All: Lord, have mercy

◆ The response after each of the following is ... pray for us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God

All: Pray for us.

Saint Michael

Holy angels of God

Saint John the Baptist

Saint Joseph

Saint Peter and Saint Paul

Saint Andrew

Saint John

Saint Mary Magdalene

Saint Stephen

Saint Ignatius

Saint Lawrence

Saint Agnes

Saint Gregory

Saint Thomas Aquinas

Saint Jerome

Saint Augustine

Saint Basil

Saint Martin

Saint Benedict

Saint Francis and Saint Dominic

Saint Francis Xavier

Saint John Vianney

Saint Catherine

Saint Theresa

All holy men and women

- ◆ The response after each of the following prayers is Lord, save your people.

Lord, be merciful
From all evil
From every sin
From everlasting death
By your coming as man
By your death and rising to new life
By your gift of the Holy Spirit

All: Lord, save your people.

- ◆ The response to the following prayers is ... Lord, hear our prayer.

Be merciful to us sinners.
Help us to be loving and kind to others.
Bless all students and staff of our school with faith, hope and charity.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

- ◆ Please repeat after me.

Christ, hear us
Lord Jesus, hear our prayer.

All: Christ, hear us.

All: Lord Jesus, hear our prayer.

- ◆ We offer all these prayers ... In the name of the Father ... (sign of the cross).

St. Agatha

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
unknown

Date of Death
250

Feast Day
February 5

Patron Saint of:
Miners
Alpine guides
Nurses

Prayer

Dear God,
Thank You for St. Agatha.
Help us to learn from her
example. Like her, we pray
with all our heart when we
are tempted to do anything
wrong.
Amen.

Biography

A pretty, young girl named Agatha lived in Italy in the third century. The governor, at that time, heard of her beauty and had her brought to his palace. He wanted her to change her faith, but she would not give in. She was very brave, and gave herself up to Jesus.

The governor tried many times to change her, but Agatha had great trust in God, and she prayed all the time. She tried to explain to him how she was a slave of Jesus Christ, but he did not understand. When he realized that she would not sin, he became angry, and had her tortured because of her faith.

After she was tortured, the Apostle Peter was supposed to have appeared and cured her. However, the torture did not stop, and she died in prison the next day.

The year after her death, her intervention was credited with stopping the eruption of Mt. Etna. Many people now ask for her protection against fire.

Quote

*"Jesus Christ, Lord of all things! You see my heart, You know my desires.
Possess all that I am – You alone. I am the sheep.
Make me worthy to overcome the devil."
St. Agatha.*

St. Aloysius Gonzaga

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
March 9, 1568

Date of Death
June 21, 1591

Feast Day
June 21

Patron Saint of:
Young men and women

Prayer
O Holy Mary, my mother,
Into thy blessed trust
and special custody,
and into the bosom of thy
mercy, I, this day,
and every day,
and in the hour of my death,
commend my soul and body.
To thee I commit
all my anxieties and sorrows,
my life and the end of my life,
that by thy most holy
intercession,
and by thy merits,
all my actions may be directed
and governed by Thy will
and that of Thy Son.
Amen.

Biography

Aloysius Gonzaga was an Italian prince who grew up in a castle. From the time he was four, Aloysius was trained to be a soldier and a nobleman. Although his family practised their faith and performed good works, their behavior was sometimes very inappropriate.

While he was still young, Aloysius began to practise prayer and penance. He even instructed poor boys in their catechism. At the age of 18, being the oldest son, Aloysius gave up his rights to his family's lands and joined the Jesuit priests. Aloysius hoped to go to the missions and share his faith with people who did not know Jesus Christ. However, in 1591 the plague broke out in Rome, and Aloysius offered himself to serve the sick and dying in the hospital. He too caught the plague and died three months later. Aloysius was just 23 years old when he died. He is known as the patron saint of young men.

Quote

"There is no more evident sign that anyone is a saint than to see him leading a good life and at the same time a prey to desolation, suffering, and trials."

St. Aloysius Gonzaga

St. Ambrose

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

340 A.D.

Date of Death

April 4, 397

Feast Day

December 7

Patron Saint of:

beekeepers,
candlemakers,
students, learning

Prayer

O Jesus Christ, let us live.
O Thou Who dost not will
the death of a sinner:
grant forgiveness unto us
whom Thou hast
established in flesh,
so that by penitential acts
we may come to enjoy
eternal life in the Heavens,
through our Lord Jesus
Christ Who reigneth with
Thee
and the Holy Spirit
throughout all ages of ages.
Amen.

Biography

Ambrose may be a peculiar name for us, but Ambrose is a wonderful example for us today. There is not much known about his childhood. He was born a long time ago, in the year 340 A.D. Ambrose studied in Rome and became a very good speaker.

At the young age of 34, he was appointed Bishop of Rome. Ambrose gave all his money to the Church and to the poor. He defended the Catholic Church whenever people tried to criticize it. So good was he at speaking that he is known as the "Honey Tongued Doctor" of the Church. In pictures, St. Ambrose is often shown holding a church in his hand.

He died at the age of 57.

Quote

"No one heals himself by wounding another."

St. Ambrose

St. Andrew the Apostle

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
Unknown

Feast Day
November 30

Patron Saint of:
fishermen, singers,
Scotland, maidens

Prayer
Dear Saint Andrew,
Brother of Simon Peter,
you heard John the Baptist
say:
"Behold the Lamb of God,"
and you chose to follow
Jesus. Leaving your nets,
you became a successful
fisher of souls.
Lover of the Crucified
Christ, you too were
crucified like him.
Teach us to live and suffer
for him and to lead others to
Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Biography

Andrew was born in the town of Bethsaida and grew up in Israel, in the area of Galilee. Like his father and his brother, Simon Peter, Andrew was a fisherman.

Andrew was there when John the Baptist baptized Jesus at the River Jordan. When John the Baptist said, "Behold the Lamb of God," Andrew understood and followed Jesus. In fact, Andrew is considered to be the first disciple or follower of Jesus.

Later, when Jesus chose his twelve disciples -- you guessed it -- Andrew was among the twelve. He spent his life leading others to Jesus. He became a missionary and traveled to Asia Minor and Greece, spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Because of his faith in Jesus Christ, Andrew was crucified on an x-shaped cross in Greece.

Quote

"We have found the Messiah, that is to say, the Christ."
St. Andrew

St. Anthony Mary Claret

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1807

Date of Death
1870

Feast Day
October 24

Patron Saint of:
unknown

Prayer

O God, You strengthened
St. Anthony Mary with
wondrous love and patience
in evangelizing the people.
Through his intercession,
enable us to seek those
things which are Yours, and
to labor in Christ for the
good of our fellow men.
Amen.

Biography

Anthony was born in Sallent, Spain, in the year 1807. He labored as a missionary in Catalonia and the Canary Islands for ten years, giving missions and retreats. His zeal inspired other priests to join in the same work, and in 1849 he founded the Congregation of Missionary Sons of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. The institute is known by his name as "the Claretians."

Father Claret was appointed Archbishop of Santiago in Cuba. Despite threats on his life, here he founded the Teaching Sisters of Mary Immaculate.

At the request of Pope Pius IX, he returned to Spain and devoted himself to missionary work and the spreading of good literature. In the course of his life he is said to have preached ten thousand sermons and to have published two hundred books or pamphlets for both priests and lay-people. He spread devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and the Immaculate Heart of Mary by his preaching and writings. Many favors and cures rewarded his union with God.

St. Anthony died in a Cistercian monastery in France on October 24, 1870. Pope Pius XII canonized him.

Quote

"It was (Christ) who gave gifts to mankind; He appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets, others to be evangelists, others to be pastors and teachers. He did this . . . to build up the body of Christ."

Ephesians 4:11-12

St. Anthony of Padua

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1195

Date of Death
June 13, 1231

Feast Day
June 13

Patron Saint of:
Lost articles, poor people

Prayer of St. Anthony
O God, send forth your Holy Spirit into my heart that I may perceive, into my mind that I may remember, and into my soul that I may meditate. Inspire me to speak with piety, holiness, tenderness and mercy.

Teach, guide and direct my thoughts and senses from beginning to end.

May your grace ever help and correct me, and may I be strengthened now with wisdom from on high, for the sake of your infinite mercy. Amen.

Biography

Anthony was born in the year 1195 in Portugal, although the people of Padua, Italy, have great respect for him. His family was wealthy, and they wanted Anthony to be a great nobleman. However, Anthony wanted to serve Christ, and he joined the Franciscan order of priests. For many years he studied the bible carefully. He was quite sickly and was unable to do any missionary work. He lived in a cave and left only to attend Mass and sweep the nearby monastery.

One day, however, he was asked to replace a preacher who was unable to attend Mass. They discovered that Anthony had a great gift for preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ. His reputation as a speaker grew and, soon, Anthony was travelling through France and Italy teaching theology and evangelizing to people. Anthony's words caused many people to believe in Jesus Christ. Legend tells us that even the fish liked to listen to his words. Jesus worked through Anthony as he preached. Miracles began to happen, and people were cured of diseases when Anthony touched them.

Anthony died at the young age of 36. He was so well-loved and respected that, within one year of his death, he was canonized as a saint.

Christians often pray to St. Anthony when they have lost something, although it is not clear as to why.

Quote

*"Actions speak louder than words;
let your words teach and your actions speak."*
St. Anthony of Padua

St. Barbara

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Unknown

Date of Death

235 A.D.

Feast Day

December 4

Patron Saint of:

Firefighters, miners,
Mathematicians,
Construction workers,
sailors, hatmakers

Biography

Barbara was a beautiful maiden who lived during the Middle Ages. Barbara's father wanted her to marry, and many young men asked for her hand in marriage, but she refused every time. For her disobedience, her father imprisoned Barbara in a high tower to keep her under control.

Within the tower, Barbara was taught by philosophers and poets. She learned about Christ and became a Christian. This angered her father so much that he wanted to kill her. Barbara escaped, but her father caught her, tortured her, and killed her. He was immediately struck by lightning or, what some people say, by fire from heaven.

She is recognized as one of the *Fourteen Holy Helpers*.

Quote

St. Barnabas

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
61 A.D.

Feast Day
June 11

Patron Saint of:
hailstorms, Cyprus

Prayer

Dear Saint Barnabas,
you sold your own
possessions to share them
with the larger community.
Pray for us that we may
learn to be generous,
giving, and sharing with
those in need.
Amen.

Biography

Barnabas was a Jew who believed in Jesus. He came to Jerusalem to join the Christian community. Before he arrived in Jerusalem, he was known by the name of Joseph. The apostles, however, changed his name from Joseph to Barnabas. In the Gospel of Luke, we learn that the name, Barnabas, means "man of encouragement."

All that we know of Barnabas is recorded by Luke in the bible ... in the book known as the Acts of the Apostles. Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and full of faith. It was Barnabas who accepted Paul into the community when Paul became a Christian. It was Barnabas who was at Paul's side for many years, telling others about Jesus Christ. Barnabas also spent time evangelizing with Saint Mark. He founded the Church in Antioch.

Barnabas died for his faith. He was stoned to death in the year 61 A.D. At the time of his death, he was carrying a copy of the Gospel of Saint Matthew, which he had copied by hand. We can ask St. Barnabas to pray for us, particularly against hailstorms.

Quote

"And so it was that Joseph, a Levite born in Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "One who Encourages"), sold a field he owned, brought the money, and handed it over to the apostles."

Acts 4: 36 - 37

St. Benedict

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
March 25, 1748

Date of Death
April 17, 1783

Feast Day
April 16

Patron Saint of:
Bachelors, beggars
homeless people, pilgrims,

Prayer
Saint Benedict, you gave up
honor, money and home for love
of Jesus. Help us to set our
hearts on Jesus and not on the
things of this world. You lived in
obscurity among the poor in the
streets. Enable us to see Jesus
in our poor brothers and sisters
and not judge by appearances.
Make us realize that, in helping
them, we are helping Jesus.
Show us how to befriend them
and not pass them by.

St. Benedict, you had a great love
for prayer. Obtain for us the
grace of persevering prayer,
especially adoration for Jesus in
the Most Blessed Sacrament.

St. Benedict, poor in the eyes of
men but rich in the eyes of God,
pray for us. Amen.

Biography

Saint Benedict was born in France 250 years ago. He was the oldest of fifteen children in a prosperous middle class family. He received a good education under the care of his parents and his uncle, who was a priest.

At the age of sixteen, Benedict tried to join the Trappist order of priests, but he was turned away.

He decided to live the life of a pilgrim, wandering through Europe for years, living on the charity of others and living a life of poverty. If he was given more than he needed for the day, Benedict would give the remainder to some one he considered more in need than he was.

Benedict cured some of the homeless people he met and was a noted counselor to people of all walks of life in Rome.

Benedict visited many churches and, wherever he went, he carried a copy of the bible with him. He loved to read the bible, and he liked to reflect on Jesus and Mary as he walked.

Benedict died in 1783 in his favorite church in the city of Rome. He was 35 years old. 136 miraculous cures were attributed to him within three months of his death.

The name, Benedict, means "blessed".

Quote

"My Good -- my All -- sole Object of my love -- O come! I long for Thee, I sigh after Thee, I wait for Thee! Every little delay seems a thousand years! Come, Lord Jesus, and tarry not."
St. Benedict Labre

St. Blase

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Date of Death
316

Feast Day
February 3

Patron Saint of:
Those with diseases of the
throat

Prayers
Dear God,
Thank You for St. Blasé,
loving God. May we always
be grateful for good health and
may our throats always sing
out your praise. Amen.

Dear bishop and lover of
souls, you willingly bore heavy
crosses in faithful imitation of
Jesus. Similarly, with Christ-
like compassion you cured
many sufferers. Than after
undergoing horrible torture,
you died as a martyr for Christ.
Obtain a cure for these
{describe the afflictions} ills if
this is agreeable to God.
Amen.

Biography

St. Blasé lived in the fourth century. He was a doctor, who cared a lot for his patients. As a young man, he often thought about the sufferings of others.

Although he enjoyed being a doctor, he realized that people needed spiritual joy in their lives to be 'well'. He became a priest to teach others about God's love. He then later became a bishop. Blasé worked to make his people happy and holy. He love preaching and praying to his people.

When the governor of that time began to persecute Christians, Blasé was captured and sent to prison. On the way to prison, a crowd gathered to see their beloved bishop one more time. A woman brought her little boy to Blasé. The young child was choking to death on a fishbone. Blasé whispered a prayer and blessed the boy. He saved the child's life. It was a miracle!

Today, St. Blasé is called upon by all who have throat diseases. We still have the "blessing of the throats" on the feast of St. Blasé. We ask him to protect us from sicknesses of the throat.

Quote

"Through the intercession of St. Blasé, bishop and martyr, may God deliver you from all ailments of the throat and from every other evil. In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Blessing of St. Blase

St. Bridget of Ireland

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
453

Date of Death
525

Feast Day
February 1

Patron Saint of:
Dairy workers

Prayer
Dear God,
Thank You for St. Bridget.
Help us to share what we
have with others, as she
did. Thank You for giving
us places to go to for prayer
and learning about You.
Amen.

Biography

After St. Patrick had arrived in Ireland, a few years later, a little girl named Bridget was born. She was a happy child, who loved music and animals. As she grew up, she deepened her love for Jesus. She looked for him in the poor, and would often bring them her clothing and food to them.

Once Bridget saw a leper on the roadside. He had no money and was very poor. She gave the leper her father's treasured jeweled sword. Her father could not understand his daughter's actions. She was simply full of love for others and wanted to share with them what she had.

Bridget worked in a dairy. It is said that she once gave away a whole pail of milk. But she began to worry about what her mother might say, so she prayed to the Lord to make up for what she gave away. She prayed very hard. When she got home, her pail was full again.

As she grew older, so did her beauty. Her father felt it was time for her to marry, but she had given herself to God already. She asked God that her beauty be taken away, so no one would want to marry her. God granted her request, and Bridget became a nun. Bridget began a convent for other young women so they too, could become nuns. Once she consecrated her life to God in the convent, Bridget was beautiful again. It was a miracle!

Bridget concentrated on helping the less fortunate. She reminds us not to waste time or worry about whether we are nice-looking or plain. We are all special to God.

Quote

"I would like the angels of Heaven to be among us. I would like an abundance of peace. I would like full vessels of charity. I would like rich treasures of mercy. I would like cheerfulness to preside over all. I would like Jesus to be present."

Saint Bridget

St. Catherine Laboure

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

May 2, 1806

Date of Death

December 31, 1876

Feast Day

November 25

Prayer

St. Catherine, we thank you
for your example of love
and obedience. Pray for us
and our needs. Amen.

Biography

In 1806, on a farm in France, Catherine was born. She was the ninth of eleven children. Her mother died when Catherine was only eight years old. She walked miles each day just to go to daily Mass. She loved the Lord so much that she became a Sister of the Daughters of Charity, and she spent her days taking care of the sick and the poor.

From when she was a small child, Catherine could feel God's presence whenever she prayed. Three times the Virgin Mary appeared to her, telling her to have a medal made with the image of the Virgin Mary - the Immaculate Conception - stamped on it. Catherine was obedient to Mary and, ever since, people are wearing this medal, which is known as the Miraculous Medal. On one side of the medal are the words: "*O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us.*" On the other side of the medal are the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The Virgin Mary told Catherine that anyone who wore the medal would receive great graces.

Quote

"O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."
St. Catherine Laboure

St. Catherine of Siena

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
March 25, 1347

Date of Death
April 29, 1380

Feast Day
April 29

Patron Saint of:
firefighters, nurses,
sick people, Italy

Prayer
God of Wisdom,
You made our sister,
Catherine,
burn with divine love in
contemplating the Lord's
passion
and in serving your Church.
With the help of her prayers
may your people,
united in the mystery of
Christ,
rejoice forever in the
revelation of His glory,
Who lives and reigns with
you and the Holy Spirit,
God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

Biography

Catherine was born in Siena, a place in Italy, where Catherine was the youngest child of a very large family.

When she was only six years old, while she was in church, Catherine had a vision of Jesus. She knew that Jesus wanted her to do some special work, so she prepared for it by prayer. She gave all of her time to caring for the poor.

At that time, the popes had been living in the country of France, because there was a lot of trouble in Rome. Catherine visited Pope Gregory and asked him to return to Rome. Ever since then, Rome has been the home of the Popes.

Catherine's last days were full of suffering. Catherine spent lots of time praying in front of the cross. Jesus gave her the stigmata ... the wounds of Christ on her body. She had wounds in her hands and feet, just like Jesus when He was nailed to the cross.

Catherine was only 33 years old when she died. Hundreds of years after she lived, in the year 1970, the Catholic Church recognized Catherine as a saint and a Doctor of the Church.

Quote

*"Everything comes from love, all is ordained for the salvation of man,
God does nothing without this goal in mind. ...
Charity is the sweet and holy bond which links the soul with its Creator:
it binds God with man and man with God."*

St. Catherine of Siena

St. Cecilia

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Unknown

Date of Death

117 A.D.

Feast Day

November 22

Patron Saint of:

musicians, composers,
poets, singers, martyrs

Prayer

Dear Saint Cecilia,
one thing we know for
certain about you is that you
became a heroic martyr in
your faithfulness to Christ.

We know that you heard
angels sing.

Inspire musicians to
gladden the hearts of
people by filling the air with
God's gift of music and
reminding them of the
divine Musician who
created all beauty.

Amen.

Biography

Cecilia lived in Rome about a hundred years after Christ. Cecilia promised her virginity to God, but her parents forced her to marry a man named Valerian of Trastevere. She told her new husband that she was accompanied by an angel, but in order to see it, he must be purified. He agreed and was baptised. Returning from the ceremony, he found Cecilia in prayer accompanied by a praying angel. The angel placed a crown on each of their heads and offered Valerian a favor; the new convert asked that his brother be baptised.

The story about Cecilia's death is very beautiful. She refused to sacrifice to the pagan gods and, as a result, the Romans condemned her to be smothered by steam. But God protected her, and she did not die. The Romans then ordered a soldier to kill her with a sword. The soldier struck her three times, but did not cut off her head. She was badly wounded and remained alive for three days. On the fourth day, after receiving Holy Communion, she died.

Cecilia is one of the most famous martyrs. That means that she chose to die rather than deny her faith in God. She is honored as the patron saint of musicians because, at her own wedding feast, she ignored the pagan celebrations and sang to God in her heart. Saint Cecilia reminds us of the importance of music in our liturgies.

Quote

*"While the profane music of her wedding was heard,
Cecilia was singing in her heart a hymn of love for Jesus, her true spouse."
Acts of Cecilia*

St. Elizabeth of Hungary

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1207

Date of Death
1231

Feast Day
November 17

Patron Saint of:
bakers, hospitals,
beggars, brides

Prayer
Saint Elizabeth, you
sacrificed your wealth and
your time to the needs of
the less fortunate. Pray for
us that we too may show
compassion and love to
others. Amen.

Biography

Elizabeth was the daughter of royalty. Her father was the king of Hungary. At the young age of 14, she married a German prince and, together, they had four children.

Even though she was a princess, Elizabeth wore simple clothing and led a life of prayer, sacrifice, and service of the poor and the sick. Every day, she would take bread to hundreds of poor people. Elizabeth built hospitals to care for the needy and the sick.

Unfortunately, Elizabeth's husband died of the plague, and she joined the Third Order of St. Francis, a group of religious who spent their days helping the sick and the poor. She died at the young age of 24.

Saint Elizabeth of Hungary is the patron saint of hospitals because she helped the sick. She is also the patron saint of bakers, because she brought bread to the poor.

Quote

"Apart from those active good works, I declare before God that I have seldom seen a more contemplative woman."
Conrad of Marburg, spiritual director of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary

St. Eugene de Mazenod

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
August 1, 1782

Date of Death
May 21, 1861

Feast Day
May 21

Patron Saint of:
dysfunctional families

Prayer
Dear St. Eugene,
we ask you to pray for our
families, that we may grow
in love for God and for each
other. Inspire us to practice
charity and to share our
love for God with others.
Amen.

Biography

Charles Joseph Eugene de Mazenod is a long name, but today we know him simply as Saint Eugene de Mazenod.

He was born in France 200 years ago and grew up in a family where there was lots of fighting. Eventually, his parents divorced. In 1790, the family fled to Italy to escape the French Revolution. Before he was twenty he was already ordained a priest. He took care of the poor and the young, particularly those who had never heard of Jesus Christ.

Eugene de Mazenod started a group of priests and brothers who would spread the good news of Jesus Christ to those who did not know Him. They were called the Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Some of these Oblates were sent to Canada, even before Canada was a country. Within ten years, the Oblates had established themselves all over Canada. Even today, the Oblate priests continue to work in missions in Canada and around the world.

Eugene de Mazenod died in 1861. One hundred thirty-four years later, in 1995, he was canonized, which means that the Catholic church recognized him as a saint.

Quote

"Learn who you are in the eyes of God."
Saint Eugene de Mazenod

St. Frances of Rome

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1384

Date of Death
March 9, 1440

Feast Day
March 9

Patron Saint of:
Taxi drivers, motorists,
widows

Prayers
Merciful Father, help us to
serve you faithfully, as
Frances did in all the
situations of our life. Amen.

Dear Frances, you were an
exemplary wife, ever faithful to
your husband. After his death,
you founded and governed the
Congregation of Mount Olivet,
revealing your great devotion
to our Lord's Passion. Your
faith in angels was rewarded
by frequent visions of them.
Please pray for Catholics in
our day that they may be as
dedicated to God as you were.
Amen.

Biography

Frances was born in Rome in the country of Italy in 1384. Her parents were wealthy, but they taught Frances to be concerned about people and to live a good Christian life.

Frances wanted to be a nun but, in obedience to her parents, she got married instead. She was happily married to a man named Lorenzo, and they had three children. Tragically, two of her children died when they were still babies. In her sadness, she became very understanding and compassionate towards others who were grieving a loss or who were less fortunate.

Frances and her sister-in-law, Vannozza, loved and cared for their own families while also caring for the poor and the sick. They brought food and firewood to people who needed it. Frances became more and more prayerful. She grew close to Jesus and Mary. Many Romans came to Frances for guidance and comfort because they admired her character and her vision. Other women began to imitate Frances, living a life of prayer and caring for others.

In 1426, Frances founded the Oblates of Mary, later known as the Oblates of the Collatines. When her husband died, Frances entered the order and was soon elected to be its superior.

She died on March 9, 1440, at the age of fifty-six. At her death great crowds came to honor her. It wasn't until 270 years later that this woman was recognized by the Catholic church as a saint. We too are invited to model her behavior, showing compassion and love to others whenever we can.

Quote

The life of Frances of Rome calls each of us to look deeply for God in prayer and see Jesus among the suffering of our world. St. Frances of Rome said,
"It is most laudable in a married woman to be devout. Sometimes she must leave God at the altar to find Him in her housekeeping."

St. Francis of Assisi

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1182

Date of Death
October 4, 1226

Feast Day
October 4

Patron Saint of:
Ecologists

Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of
your peace.

Where there is hatred,
let me sow love.

Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light.

O, divine Master,
grant that I may not seek
so much to be consoled
as to console;

To be understood,
as to understand.

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive.

It is in pardoning
that we are pardoned.

And it is in dying
That we are born to eternal life.
Amen

Biography

About 800 years ago in Italy, Saint Francis was born into a wealthy family and enjoyed all the comforts and pleasures of life and wore the designer clothes of that time. As a teenager, Francis became a soldier, but he was captured in war and suffered serious illness. While he was sick, Francis felt that God was calling him to live as Jesus did. So the young man chose to listen to God. He began to visit the sick in hospitals and to help the poor. He even began to wear clothes like the poor and to help repair church buildings. His father got angry, called him a 'madman', and disinherited him.

St. Francis believed that all the things God created are like our brothers and sisters. Animals loved him and he addressed the sun, moon and stars as his brothers and sisters.

Once, while he was praying, St. Francis had a vision of Jesus hanging on the cross. He wanted so badly to be like Jesus, that stigmata – the marks of Jesus' five wounds – appeared on his hands and feet and remained there all his life.

Other men began to follow his example, and soon St. Francis was given permission by the pope to start a new religious order called the Franciscans. 800 years later, there still are Franciscan priests and monks.

Quote

*"What are the servants of God but singers whose duty it is
to lift up hearts and move them to spiritual joy?"*

St. Francis of Assisi

St. Francis Xavier

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1506

Date of Death
1552

Feast Day
December 3

Patron Saint of:
China, Japan,
missionaries, navigators

Prayer
Great Saint Francis,
well beloved and full of charity,
in union with you I reverently
adore the Divine Majesty.
I give thanks to God for the
singular gifts of grace bestowed
on you in life and of glory after
death, and I beg of you,
with all the affection of my heart,
by your powerful intercession,
obtain for me the grace to live a
holy life and die a holy death.
I beg you to obtain for me
{mention your petition}.
But if what I ask is not for the
glory of God and for my well-
being, obtain for me,
I beseech you, what will more
certainly attain these ends.
Amen.

Biography

Francis was a nobleman from the Basque region of Spain. He studied philosophy and eventually became a professor of philosophy at the University of Paris. Francis was a friend to Saint Ignatius of Loyola, who convinced him to use his talents to spread the Gospel. Francis became one of the founding order of priests known as the Jesuits. In fact, he was the first Jesuit missionary.

He traveled to places like Borneo, China, India, Japan and the East Indies. For this reason, he also became known as the Apostle to the Far East. There, he preached the Good News in the street, worked with the sick, and taught children their catechism. He would call the children to their studies by walking through the streets and ringing a bell.

It is believed that Francis baptized over 40 000 children and adults. He traveled thousands of miles, sometimes on long sea voyages. Wherever he went, Francis helped the poor and the forgotten.

Quote

"I conscientiously made the rounds of the villages. I bathed in the sacred waters all the children who had not yet been baptized."

From a letter from Saint Francis Xavier to Saint Ignatius Loyola

St. Gemma Galgani

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
March 12, 1878

Date of Death
April 11, 1903

Feast Day
April 11

Patron Saint of:
pharmacists,
those who have lost their
parents

Prayer

O my crucified God, behold me at Your feet, do not cast me out, now that I appear before You as a sinner. I have offended You exceedingly in the past, my Jesus, but it shall be so no longer.

Before You, O Lord, I place all my sins; I have now considered Your own sufferings and see how great is the worth of that Precious Blood that flows from Your veins.

O my God, at this hour, close Your eyes to my want of merit, and since You have been pleased to die for my sins, grant me forgiveness for them all, that I may no longer feel the burden of my sins.

Assist me, my Jesus, for I desire to be good whatsoever it may cost; take away, destroy utterly root out all that You find in me contrary to Your holy will. At the same time, I pray you, Lord Jesus, to enlighten me that I may be able to walk in your Holy light. Amen.

Biography

Gemma was born in Italy in the year 1878. She was the daughter of a poor pharmacist. Her mother died when she was only seven years of age, and her father died when she was eighteen. Gemma took care of her seven brothers and sisters. At the age of 20, she became very ill with an incurable disease of the spine: spinal tuberculosis. Gemma prayed to St. Gabriel, and her prayers were answered. She was cured! Gemma wanted to become a nun, but she was turned away because they did not believe that she had been cured.

Gemma received the stigmata. For two years, the wounds of Jesus mysteriously appeared on her hands and feet each Thursday evening through Friday afternoon.

She again became very sick. Despite her illness, she lived a very prayerful life and suffered without complaining.

Gemma died on April 11, 1903. It was the night before Easter. On her deathbed, her last words were spoken as she lifted her eyes to a picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She said: "Mother, I give my soul into your hands. Ask Jesus to be merciful to me."

Quote

*"If I saw the gates of hell open and I stood on the brink of the abyss,
I should not despair, I should not lose hope of mercy,
because I should trust in You, my God."*

St. Gemma Galgani

St. George

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
304 A.D.

Feast Day
April 23

Patron Saint of:
Soldiers, archers,
Butchers, horsemen,
Boy Scouts, England

Prayer

O God, who didst grant to
Saint George strength and
constancy in the various
torments which he sustained
for our holy faith; we beseech
Thee to preserve, through his
intercession, our faith from
wavering and doubt, so that
we may serve Thee with a
sincere heart faithfully unto
death. Through Christ our
Lord. Amen.

Biography

Several stories have been attached to Saint George. In some children's stories, St. George is depicted slaying a dangerous dragon that lived in a lake in the country of Libya. Armies had challenged the creature, but all had been defeated. The dragon is said to have eaten two sheep each day but, when sheep were scarce, young maidens were offered instead.

This is where St. George came to the rescue. He rode to where the dragon lived, blessed himself with the sign of the cross and, with a single blow with his lance, killed the monster. It was his subsequent passionate sermon that converted the local people to Christianity. St. George was rewarded with a large sum of money, which he shared with the poor before riding away.

Devotion to St. George spread throughout Europe in the 10th century. So popular was this dragon-slaying saint that his feast day, April 23, became as widely celebrated as Christmas.

While we don't have a lot of information about St. George, we know that he was a soldier in the Roman army and was quite involved in the organization of a Christian community in Rome. He was tortured and beheaded – martyred for his faith in Jesus Christ – in Lydda, Palestine in 304 A.D.

Quote

*"Saint George was a man who abandoned one army for another;
he gave up the rank of tribune to enlist as a soldier for Christ.
Eager to encounter the enemy, he first stripped away his worldly wealth
by giving all he had to the poor. Then, bearing the shield of faith,
he plunged into the battle, an ardent soldier of Christ.
Dear brothers, let us not only admire the courage of this fighter in heaven's army,
but follow his example."
(from a sermon by St. Peter Damian, priest)*

St. Gregory the Great

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
540

Date of Death
March 12, 604

Feast Day
September 3

Patron Saint of:
choir boys, singers,
students, teachers,
Popes

Prayer
O God, You look upon your people with compassion, and rule over them with love. Through the intercession of Pope St. Gregory, give wisdom to the leaders of Your Church that the growth of Your people in holiness and love of You may be the everlasting joy of our pastors. Amen.

Biography

Gregory was the son of a wealthy Roman senator. As a boy, Gregory spent much time in prayer. When he grew up, Gregory spent one year as a judge in Rome. Then, because he loved God so much and wanted to help God's people, he quit his job and used all of his money to build monasteries.

One day Gregory saw some English children being sold as slaves, and he decided to go to England as a missionary. Later Gregory was chosen as pope. He returned to Rome but sent others to England to continue his missionary work.

Gregory was a very good pope. He was known for feeding starving people, for treating people fairly, and protecting them from harm. Gregory was very good at many things. He was especially good at preaching, teaching, and writing about God's goodness. Gregory was also a good musician and is credited with developing the "Gregorian chant."

Gregory was named "Gregory the Great" because of all the good things he did in his lifetime. The name Gregory means "watchman", and Gregory certainly did watch over God's people.

Quote

*"The proof of love is in the works. Where love exists, it works great things.
But when it ceases to act, it ceases to exist."*
St. Gregory the Great

St. Ignatius of Antioch

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
unknown

Date of Death
107

Feast Day
October 17

Patron Saint of:
soldiers, Jesuits, retreats

Prayer
Teach us to be generous,
good Lord;
teach us to serve You
as You deserve;
to give
and not to count the cost,
to fight and
not to heed the wounds,
to toil
and not to seek for rest,
to labor and not to ask for
any reward save that of
knowing we do Your will.

Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Biography

Born in Syria, Ignatius converted to Christianity and eventually become Bishop of Antioch. In the year 107 the Emperor Trajan visited Antioch and forced the Christians there to choose between death and apostasy. Ignatius would not deny Christ and thus was condemned to be put to death in Rome.

On the long journey to Rome, he wrote seven letters. Five of these letters are to Churches in Asia Minor, and he urged the Christians there to remain faithful to God and to obey their superiors.

The sixth letter was to Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who was later martyred for the Faith. The final letter begs the Christians in Rome not to try to stop his martyrdom. In the year 107 Ignatius bravely met the lions in the Coliseum.

Strengthened by the love of God, Ignatius showed great concern for the unity of the Church and steadfast fidelity to Christ.

Quote

"The only thing I ask of you is to allow me to offer the libation of my blood to God. I am the wheat of the Lord; may I be ground by the teeth of the beasts to become the pure bread of Christ."

St. Ignatius of Antioch

St. Isaac Jogues

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1607

Date of Death
unknown

Feast Day
October 19

Patron Saint of:
Americas, Canada

Prayer
O God, You consecrated
the spread of the faith in
North America by the blood
of St. Isaac Jogues and his
companions who were
preaching the faith to the
Indians. Through their
intercession let more people
everywhere respond to the
Good News of salvation.
Amen.

Biography

Born in France in the year 1607, Isaac Jogues had always wanted to become a missionary. He joined the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) and was sent to New France, as Canada was then called. His joy was great as he stepped on shore in the New World. For years, he had dreamed of leading the "savage redskins" to the feet of Christ.

Father Jogues and his companions suffered great hardships and were always in danger of death. Whenever anything went wrong among the Indians, the "Blackrobes" as the priests were called by the natives, were blamed.

On an expedition to Quebec for supplies of medicine and food, Father Jogues and his companions were surrounded by a band of Iroquois, who were the most warlike of the Indian tribes. They were taken captive and were tortured without mercy for months. Later, he did escape and returned to France.

But Father Jogues again returned to the Indians. One evening he was seized in the wigwam of an Iroquois chief. His head was crushed with a tomahawk and he was scalped.

Quote

*"I prefer to remain as a captive unless it be
the will of God that I escape."*
St. Isaac Jogues

St. Jerome Emiliani

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

1481

Date of Death

1537

Feast Day

February 8

Patron Saint of:

orphans and abandoned children

Prayer

Dear God,
We ask St. Jerome to help us see the importance of being a good example. Help us recognize the opportunities we have to witness to our love for Jesus, Mary and our Catholic faith.
Amen.

Biography

Jerome was born into a noble family in Venice. He grew to become a good soldier and commander but gave very little thought to God. One day, he was captured and taken prisoner.

While he was in prison, he began to think of the careless way in which he lived his life, and was sorry for not including God in it. He made a promise to the Blessed Mother that he would change his life if she would but help him. He escaped from prison and went straight to church.

He eventually became a priest and was devoted to works of charity. He was especially concerned about the homeless and orphaned children he saw in the streets. He gave them food and clothing and taught them the truths of his faith.

Jerome started a religious order of men called the Company of the Servants of the Poor. Here, he cared for others, even working with the peasants in the fields.

Jerome died of the plague, while caring for plague victims. He was a gift to the people of his time. He turned his life around and became an image of the love of God.

Quote

"I urge you to persevere in your love for Christ and your faithful observance of the law of Christ. Our goal is God, the source of all good. As we say in our prayer, we are to place our trust in God and in no one else."

Saint Jerome Emiliani (in a letter to his brothers)

Saint Joan of Arc

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Jan 6, 1412

Date of Death
1431

Feast Day
May 30

Patron Saint of:
France, soldiers, martyrs

Prayer

Let us pray.
Dear God, thank you
for Saint Joan of Arc.
Help us to be as brave
as she was and to
always listen to your voice.
May we offer Your peace
and love to everyone we
meet today.
Amen.

Biography

A long time ago there was a little girl who was born in France. She had four brothers and sisters. Joan loved to do many things. She loved to sew and to be a good housekeeper. She tended the sheep and liked to ride on her horse.

Joan was a very happy girl. She spent a lot of time praying and doing special things to show her love for God. She showed her kindness to the poor whenever she could. She would often go to Mass.

One day, an angel appeared to Joan and told her that she would be a soldier. She would lead her country in war. Joan told the angel that she would do as God wished. She rode into battle carrying a banner with the names Mary and Jesus on it. Joan would lead the fearful French soldiers onto victory. Then she herself crowned Charles VII King of France.

When the king was crowned, Joan asked to be allowed to return to her own family, but the king refused. In 1431 some of the soldiers turned her over to the enemy who had her burned to death.

Joan was very, very brave. She felt protected and knew in her heart that God was always with her. She wanted peace, not war. Joan of Arc is known as the patron saint of soldiers.

Quote

*"About Jesus Christ and the Church, I simply know they're just one thing,
and we shouldn't complicate the matter."
Saint Joan of Arc (as recorded at her trial)*

St. John of Damascus

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

676

Date of Death

749

Feast Day

December 4

Patron Saint of:

Prayer

Biography

In his early youth, John was tutored in the Christian faith by a monk named Cosmas. Between the Christian learning of the monk and that of the Muslim schools, John became highly educated in the fields of geometry, literature, and logic.

When the Patriarch of Constantinople opposed the use of icons (religious pictures), John defended the use of icons and images in churches. Legend tells us that the Patriarch forged a letter in which John is said to have betrayed the ruler. The ruler ordered John's writing hand to be chopped off. However, the Virgin Mary appeared and re-attached the hand. This miracle restored the ruler's faith in John.

John later became a monk near Jerusalem. He wrote a book called The Fountain of Wisdom, which was a collection of theological works defending the orthodox faith. He was not only an accomplished writer, but an excellent speaker as well. John also used his musical gifts in adapting choral music for liturgies. He was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church in 1890 by Pope Leo XIII.

Quote

"Let us carefully observe the manner of life of all the apostles, martyrs, ascetics and just men who announced the coming of the Lord. And let us emulate their faith, charity, hope, zeal, life, patience under suffering, and perseverance unto death, so that we may also share their crowns of glory."

St. John of Damascus

St. John of the Cross

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
June 24, 1542

Date of Death
December 14, 1591

Feast Day
December 14

Patron Saint of:
contemplatives, mystics,
Spanish poets

Prayer

Biography

John was born in Spain 450 years ago. His family was very poor. At the age of twenty-one he joined an order of religious people known as the Carmelites. Four years later, at the age of 25, he became a priest.

After his ordination to the priesthood, John met St. Teresa of Avila, who encouraged him to work hard at making the Carmelite order more faithful to the teaching and example of Christ. That is when he took the name of John of the Cross.

Some of his fellow priests and brothers did not like the changes that John was encouraging, and they had him thrown into prison. After nine months in jail, he escaped.

In the end, John was able to lead his fellow priests closer to the teachings of Christ, and he wrote several books on the topic. Because of his writings on holiness, John was declared a Doctor of the Church. A Doctor of the Church is not a medical doctor, but someone who has given the Church some very important teachings. St. John of the Cross died on December 14, 1591.

The name, John, means "God is gracious."

Quote

"Where there is no love, pour love in, and you will pull love out."
St. John of the Cross

St. Jude Thaddeus

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
Unknown

Feast Day
October 28

Patron Saint of:
desperate cases,
hospitals, hospital workers

Prayer
O God, You made Your
Name known to us through
the Apostles. By the
intercession of St. Jude, let
Your Church continue to
grow with an increased
number of believers.
Amen.

Biography

Jude Thaddeus was a nephew of Mary and Joseph, and a cousin of our Lord. He was a brother of the Apostle James the Less. His father was Cleophas, who died a martyr, and his mother's name was Mary. She stood beneath the Cross when Jesus died, and later came to anoint the body of Jesus.

In his boyhood and youth Jude must have known Jesus well. He left all to follow the Master.

Jude is sometimes pictured with an image of our Lord because he cured the King of Edessa from leprosy in the name of Jesus.

God gave Jude a special power. When he ordered the devils in pagan idols to leave, the images fell to the ground, broken into pieces.

Jude and Simon suffered martyrdom in Persia, where they labored as missionaries. Jude was beaten to death with a club. His head was then cut from his body with an ax. His relics are now honored in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. St. Jude is very popular as the patron of impossible cases.

The name, Thaddeus, means "sweetness or gentleness of character."

Quote

"You, my friends, keep on building yourselves up on your most sacred faith. Pray in the power of the Holy Spirit, and keep yourselves in the love of God, as you wait for our Lord Jesus Christ in His mercy to give you eternal life."

Jude 1:20-21

St. Justin Martyr

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
65 A.D.

Feast Day
June 1

Patron Saint of:
philosophers

Prayer

Dear St. Justin,
Pray that we may be
obedient to the commands
of our Lord Jesus Christ.
May we be strong in our
faith just as you were.
Amen.

Biography

Justin was nicknamed "The Philosopher" because he thought very carefully about life and other important matters. He was born in the year 100 A.D. in the country we now know as Israel.

Justin was a Samaritan, and it was only at the age of 30 that he started believing in Jesus Christ. His faith grew so strongly that he often explained Christian beliefs to others. This annoyed some of the authorities of the time, and they arrested Justin. Justin was very proud to say that he was a Christian and refused to sacrifice to false gods. Justin was strong in his faith, even though he knew that the authorities would kill him because of his faith. Justin also knew that, if he was killed, he would go up to heaven.

In fact, Justin was condemned to death and was beheaded at the age of 65.

Quote

*"Philosophy is the knowledge of that which exists,
and a clear understanding of the truth;
and happiness is the reward of such knowledge and understanding."
St. Justin, Dialogue with Trypho*

St. Lawrence Ruiz

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1600

Date of Death
September 29-30, 1637

Feast Day
September 28

Patron Saint of:

Prayer
God our loving Father,
we praise you!
We thank you for crowning
our Filipino brother, Lorenzo
Ruiz, with martyrdom.

Through his intercession,
enable us by your Holy
Spirit of Love, to live and
die for you and your
beloved people, hoping that
we may be transformed day
by day into the likeness of
your Son, Jesus.

We ask this through Christ
our Lord.
Amen.

Biography

Lawrence was born in the Philippines, the son of a Chinese father and a Filipino mother. His parents were both Christian.

For unknown reasons, Lawrence was accused of murder. He escaped the Philippines on board a ship with three Dominican priests who were heading for Japan. He worked in a Dominican mission helping to spread Christianity in Japan.

At this time Christians were being persecuted in Japan and Lawrence and the other priests were arrested. The judge told Lawrence he would not be killed if he stopped being a Christian. Lawrence refused and was hung by his feet. After three pain-filled days, he died. His body was burned and the ashes thrown into the Pacific Ocean.

Lawrence was the first canonized Filipino martyr.

Quote

*"Had I a thousand lives, I would offer them all for God.
Never shall I apostatize. You may kill me if that is what you want.
To die for God - such is my will."
St. Lawrence Ruiz*

St. Leo the Great

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
400 A.D.

Date of Death
April 11, 461

Feast Day
November 10

Prayer

Saint Leo, we thank God for your wisdom and teaching. Pray for us that we too may teach others about Christ, through our words and our actions. Amen.

Biography

Saint Leo was born in Italy. He served as Pope for 21 years, from the year 440 to 461. At that time a vicious leader, called Attila the Hun, was invading Italy and marching toward its capital city, Rome. As pope, he worked hard at bringing peace.

Three years later, the city was attacked again. Many buildings were destroyed, but Saint Leo worked alongside the people to rebuild the city and its churches.

As a pope he was well-liked and highly respected. Many of his homilies, letters, and writings have been collected and saved. These sermons and letters encouraged and taught his Christian followers. It is for these writings that Leo was proclaimed a Doctor of the Church. Because he was so holy ... so faithful to God, he became known as 'the Great'.

Quote

"Virtue is nothing without the trial of temptation, for there is no conflict without an enemy, no victory without strife."
Pope Saint Leo the Great

St. Lucy

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
283 A.D.

Date of Death
304 A.D.

Feast Day
December 13

Patron Saint of:
authors, blind people,
salesmen, peasants,
stained glass workers

Prayer
Saint Lucy, you did not hide
your light under a basket,
but let it shine for the whole
world, for all the centuries to
see. We may not suffer
torture in our lives the way
you did, but we are still
called to let the light of our
Christianity illumine our
daily lives. Please help us
to have the courage to bring
our Christianity into our
work, our recreation, our
relationships, our
conversation -- every corner
of our day. Amen.

Biography

Hundreds of years ago, in the year 304, a young Christian lady was killed because of her faith in Jesus Christ. Her name was Lucy. We know her today as St. Lucy.

Lucy was a rich, young Christian who lived in Italy and promised her life to Jesus. Her mother, however, had arranged for Lucy to get married. Not wanting to get married, Lucy prayed at the tomb of Saint Agatha. Amazingly, her mother's chronic illness was cured. Her mother then agreed with Lucy's desire to live for God.

Although her mother no longer tried to force her into marriage, her bridegroom was angry. He turned Lucy over to the Roman authorities, who did not like Christians in those days, and she was arrested. The governor planned to force Lucy into a life of prostitution, but when guards tried to take her away, they were unable to move her, even with a team of oxen. The governor was furious and ordered her to be tortured and killed. During her torture, her eyes were poked out, but she regained use of them before she died. Lucy was sentenced to death by burning at the stake, but - amazingly - the fire would not start. They finally killed Lucy by stabbing her with a dagger, but there was no doubt that God was with her.

Saint Lucy is known as the patron saint of people suffering from eye diseases and blindness. The name, Lucy, means "bringer of light."

Quote

"Those whose hearts are pure are temples of the Holy Spirit."
Saint Lucy

St. Luke the Evangelist

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown (in Antioch)

Date of Death
Unknown (in Greece)

Feast Day
October 18

Patron Saint of:
painters, physicians

Prayer
O God, You chose St. Luke
to reveal in preaching and
writing Your love for the
poor. Grant that those who
already glory in Your Name
may persevere in one heart
and one mind, and that all
people may hear Your
Good News of salvation.
Amen.

Biography

Luke was born at Antioch, Syria. He was a Greek by birth and a physician by profession. He was skillful in painting, for some Greeks speak of his leaving many pictures of Jesus and Mary.

Luke was one of the earliest converts to the Faith. Later he became the missionary companion of St. Paul on part of his second and third missionary journeys. He attended Paul during his imprisonment in Caesarea and Rome. Paul refers to him as "the most dear physician" and "a fellow-laborer." He sailed with Paul and Silas from Troas to Macedonia, stayed behind for seven years at Philippi, and shared the shipwreck and perils of the voyage to Rome. From Paul's Epistles we learn that Luke was his faithful companion to the end.

Luke is the author of the third Gospel, written before the year 63. He also wrote the Acts of the Apostles. His symbol is the ox, the animal of sacrifice, because he begins his Gospel with the history of Zachary the priest, offering sacrifice to God. He speaks of the priesthood of Christ. He also speaks about the wonderful works of God in beginning His Church, and about St. Paul's actions and miracles which he himself witnessed.

The name, Luke, means "bringer of light."

Quote

"Because I have carefully studied all these matters (concerning Christ) from their beginning, I thought it would be good to write an orderly account for you . . . so that you will know the full truth."

Luke 1: 3 - 4

St. John the Baptist

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1 A.D.

Date of Death
30 A.D.

Feast Day
June 24 (birth)
August 29 (death)

Patron Saint of:
converts, printers,
epileptics, tailors

Prayer

St. John the Baptist, you
pointed out Jesus to those
who came to you.
Help me to recognize Jesus
in all the ways that He
comes into my life.
Amen.

Biography

John was born six months before his cousin, Jesus. His parents were Zachary and Elizabeth. His mother was unable to have children because she was old, but an angel brought news that Elizabeth would bear a child filled with the Holy Spirit from the moment of his birth.

Elizabeth and Mary, the mother of Jesus, were first cousins, making Jesus and John second cousins.

John had a special calling. He was to prepare the way for the coming of Jesus. When he was still young, he went into the desert to prepare himself with silence, prayer and penance.

John began his ministry at around the age of 27. Wearing a leather belt and a cloak of camel hair, and living off locusts and wild honey, John preached to the people. He told them to change their ways and to prepare for the coming of a Savior. Hearing this message from John, many people changed their ways and began preparing the way for the coming of Jesus. John baptized people with water in the Jordan River.

One day Jesus came to John to be baptized. He was about to begin his mission. On that day John told the crowds that Jesus was the Messiah. John said that Jesus was the one they had been waiting for. After he baptized Jesus, John instructed his disciples to follow Jesus.

Eventually, Herod, the king at that time, put John the Baptist in prison. He was beheaded at the age of 30.

Quote

"Jesus must become more and more, I must become less and less."

St. John the Baptist

St. Joseph

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
Unknown

Feast Days
March 19, May 1

Patron Saint of:
The Catholic Church around
the world, Canada, the
dying, fathers, carpenters
and social justice

Prayers

Saint Joseph, husband of
Mary, you were always aware
of God's presence. Help me to
see God in my life. Guard and
protect the Church on earth,
until its time is fulfilled. Amen.

Saint Joseph, patron of the
universal Church, watch over
the Church as carefully as you
watched over Jesus, help
protect it and guide it as you
did with your adopted son.
Amen

Biography

St. Joseph is a great saint. He was Jesus' foster-father and Mary's husband. Joseph was given the privilege of taking care of God's own Son, Jesus, and his mother, Mary. He was a hard-working carpenter who kept God's commandments. He was humble and pure, gentle and wise.

Whatever the Lord wanted him to do Joseph did, no matter how difficult it was. In a dream, God's angel told Joseph that he would be given the task of protecting and supporting Mary and the baby Jesus. Joseph accepted the task.

We know that Joseph loved Jesus very much. His major concern as a parent was for the safety of his child Jesus – whom he treated as his own son. When the angel told him that his family was in danger, he left everything he owned and fled to safety with his new family. He then remained in Egypt without question until the angel told him it was safe again to go.

We know that Joseph respected God. He followed God's commands throughout his life and put his trust in him.

Since Joseph doesn't appear in Jesus' public life, at his death or resurrection, many historians believe he probably died before Jesus entered public ministry.

We pray to St. Joseph as the protector of the dying for a special reason. It is believed that Joseph died peacefully in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

Quote

Although we would really like to know where and when Joseph was born, how he spent his days, and when and how he died, Scripture did leave us with the very important knowledge about who Joseph was – *"a righteous man."*
(Matthew 1:18)

St. Margaret Mary Alacoque

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1647

Date of Death
1690

Feast Day
October 16

Patron Saint of:
polio patients,
devotees of the Sacred
Heart

Prayer
O Lord, pour out upon us
the spirit with which You
enriched St. Margaret Mary.
Help us to know the love of
Christ which is too great for
human knowledge and to
be filled with the fullness of
God. Amen.

Biography

St. Margaret Mary was born in the year 1647 in France. She was a cripple, but the Blessed Virgin cured her. In thanksgiving she promised to give her life to God. When she was seventeen, Jesus appeared to her, just as He was after He was scourged. She decided at once to enter the Order of the Visitation.

Sister Margaret Mary loved our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament very much. He showed her His Sacred Heart in four visions. The flames that come forth from His Heart symbolize His burning love for us and His desire that we love Him in return. The crown of thorns around His Heart symbolizes sacrifice to make up for sin.

Jesus made at least twelve promises to her. Some of those promises are that He would bless those who honor His Sacred Heart, that He would give them all the graces they need, and that He would give them the favor of dying in the state of grace if they received Communion on nine First Fridays.

Quote

*"Look at this Heart which has loved men so much,
and yet men do not want to love Me in return.
Through you, My divine Heart wishes to spread its love everywhere on earth."
Jesus speaking to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque*

St. Margaret of Scotland

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1045 A.D.

Date of Death
November 16, 1093

Feast Day
November 16

Patron Saint of:
Scotland, queens, widows,
large families, learning

Biography

Margaret was born into royalty. Her father was an English prince and her mother - a German princess. She grew up in Europe, in a country called Hungary.

At the age of 12, war broke out, and she and her family escaped by boat, only to be shipwrecked on the coast of Scotland. They were rescued and brought to Malcolm, the king of Scotland.

Malcolm and Margaret fell in love, and she became the Queen of Scotland. They had a big family of eight children.

Even though she was a queen, Margaret loved the poor and helped them. She spent her own time and money caring for the sick and orphaned children.

In the year 1093, the royal castle was attacked, and Malcolm and his oldest son were killed. Margaret became very sick and died four days later. Margaret is now recognized as the patron saint of Scotland.

Quote

St. Marguerite d'Youville

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
October 15, 1701

Date of Death
December 23, 1771

Feast Day
October 16

Patron Saint of:
difficult marriages, widows,
victims of adultery

Prayer

Dear St. Marguerite,
you devoted your life to help
women in need.

Pray for us that we may
have the strength and
courage to do what is right,
even though we may suffer
ridicule as a result.

Amen.

Biography

Marguerite d'Youville was born 300 years ago in Quebec, and her family was very poor. Thanks to some generous relatives, she was able to study at an Ursuline convent for two years. After that, she had to teach her five younger brothers and sisters.

At the age of 21 she married a man who proved to be a selfish criminal. When her husband died eight years later, she was left with little money and many debts to pay. She managed to pay off these debts. Later, she and three other friends began sheltering needy women. They were often accused of being prostitutes or drunkards.

At the age of 46 she was put in charge of the general hospital, which was also running out of money. As you may have guessed, she worked hard and saved the hospital. The hospital was later destroyed by fire, but she built it again within four years. At the age of 70 she died.

Saint Marguerite d'Youville started the order of nuns known as the Grey Nuns. Many of you have heard of the Grey Nuns hospital in Edmonton. Marguerite d'Youville was the first Canadian-born saint.

Quote

St. Mark the Evangelist

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Unknown

Date of Death

April 25, 68 A.D.

Feast Day

April 25

Patron Saint of:

lawyers, prisoners,
stained glass workers

Prayer

Biography

We know Mark as one of the four Gospel writers; he is the author of the earliest Gospel. Mark was a member of the first Christian community in Jerusalem. He is believed to be the young man who ran away when Jesus was arrested (Mark 14: 51-52).

When Jesus died, Mark and the other disciples carried on the work of Jesus. Mark's mother owned a house in Jerusalem, which the Christians used as a place of prayer.

As a disciple of Saint Peter, he traveled with him to Rome. When St. Paul visited Jerusalem, they took Mark with them to the city of Antioch in the country of Syria. Mark, therefore, was a missionary, spreading the news of Jesus Christ to people who did not know Jesus. Mark evangelized in Alexandria, Egypt, where he established the Church there and founded the first famous Christian school.

He is believed to have rescued Christians from slavery and is, therefore, the patron saint of prisoners.

Mark was martyred on April 25, 68 in Alexandria, Egypt. Some relics of St. Mark are displayed in Venice, Italy.

Quote

"But the word of God continued to advance and gain adherents. Then after completing their mission, Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem and brought with them John, whose other name was Mark."

Acts 12: 24 - 25

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Acts 12: 24 - 25

St. Martin de Porres

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
December 9, 1579

Date of Death
1639

Feast Day
November 3

Patron Saint of:
Barbers, black people,
mixed race people, poor,
Peru, social justice

Prayer
Dear Saint Martin, we know of your helpful charity to all people, rich or poor, and also of your meekness and humility of heart. We offer our petitions to you. Pour out upon our families the precious gifts of your intercession. Show to the people of every race and every color the paths of unity and of justice. Pray that all people may grow in grace and love so that we may be deserving of eternal life. Amen.

Biography

Saint Martin lived 400 years ago in Lima, the capital city of Peru in South America. His father was a Spanish knight and his mother was an Indian. Because he was half white and half black, he was treated poorly and did not have the same privileges as others. At the age of 15, he joined a Dominican Order of priests.

Martin became known for his kindness and holiness. He often prayed with them when they were worried and would help them when they were sick. He learned to care for the sick in the poor sections of town, where he was welcomed as a black man. So many people came to Martin with their illnesses, that he turned homes into hospitals. He also opened orphanages for children who had no parents and were begging for money and food on the streets.

Today Saint Martin is the patron saint of the sick, the poor, and those suffering from injustice. He was the first black person to be canonized a saint in the Western Hemisphere.

Quote

*"It is deeply rewarding for men striving for salvation to follow in Christ's footsteps and to obey God's commandments.
If only everyone could learn this lesson from the example that Martin gave us."
Pope John XIII (at the Canonization of Saint Martin de Porres)*

St. Mary, the Blessed Virgin

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Unknown,
perhaps 20 B.C.

Date of Death

Unknown,
assumed into heaven

Feast Day

January 1 (Feast of Mary,
Mother of God),
Numerous other feast days

Patron Saint of:

the Catholic Church,
mothers

Prayer

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you,
blessed are you among
women and blessed is the
fruit of your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now and
at the hour of our death.
Amen.

Biography

Mary was born in a town called Nazareth. She was born a saint. Mary was born without sin. Her parents were Joachim and Anne. They loved her very much, but they also knew that Mary belonged to God.

When Mary was only three years old, they took her to the temple, where she was consecrated to God. Even at that very young age, Mary only wanted to do God's will – what God wanted.

Mary is the saint more loved by God than any other saint in heaven. God chose Mary to be the mother of his only son, Jesus. One day, while Mary was praying in the temple, the angel Gabriel appeared to her and told her she was to be the mother of the son of God. Very humbly, Mary said, "Yes, let it be done unto me according to Thy will."

Mary gave birth to Jesus and, along with her husband, Joseph, raised and loved him. Everyday her faith grew, for she knew Jesus was not only her son, but God's son. Jesus came to earth to die for all of our sins. Mary suffered greatly, knowing this, but she always accepted God's will. She suffered alongside Jesus, when he was crucified. Mary always remained close to Him. Before Jesus died He gave Mary to us as our Mother. Mary was chosen by God to be the Mother of the Divine Word. Mary's soul was the most beautiful that God had ever created.

Quote

"I am the Lord's servant. May it happen to me as you have said."
Luke 1: 38

St. Matthew the Apostle

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Unknown

Date of Death

Unknown

Feast Day

September 21

Patron Saint of:

Bankers, bookkeepers,
tax collectors

Prayer

May we be helped, O Lord,
by the prayers of the
Apostle and Evangelist, St.
Matthew. May what we
cannot win by our own
efforts be given us by his
intercession. Amen.

Biography

Before he was called by Jesus to be a disciple, Matthew was known as Levi. Levi was a tax collector for the Romans. This meant that he was not liked or accepted by the Jewish people.

One day Jesus approached him and said, "Follow me." He immediately left his work and followed the Master. Jesus changed his name to Matthew, which means "gift of God."

The people were surprised to see a Roman tax collector become a special friend and disciple of the Master. Jesus explained that he had come "not to call the just, but the sinners."

Matthew wrote his gospel to convince the Jews that the Messiah had come in the person of Jesus Christ. Matthew preached and worked among the Hebrews for fifteen years. He is also called the Apostle of Ethiopia. His shrine is at Salerno in southern Italy.

Quote

*Jesus left that place, and as he walked along, he saw a tax collector, named Matthew, sitting in his office. He said to him, 'Follow me.'
Matthew got up and followed him."*

Matthew 9: 9

St. Matthias

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
80 A.D.

Feast Day
May 14

Patron Saint of:
alcoholics, carpenters,
tailors

Prayer
Dear Saint Matthias,
It was God's plan that you
take the place of Judas,
who betrayed Jesus. You
were selected by the
twofold sign of the
uprightness of your life and
the call of the Holy Spirit.
Pray for us that we also will
receive the grace to
practice the same
uprightness of life and to be
called by that same Spirit to
wholehearted service of the
Church. Amen.

Biography

Remember Judas, one of Jesus' disciples. Judas betrayed Jesus and led the soldiers to the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus was arrested. In the Acts of the Apostles, in the New Testament of the Bible, we learn that another person was chosen to replace Judas after the resurrection of Jesus. This man's name was Matthias.

Matthias was with the disciples from the time that Jesus was baptized to the time of Jesus' resurrection. Matthias joined the other apostles in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ in Judea, Cappadocia, Egypt and Ethiopia.

In the year 80 A.D. Matthias was martyred. He was stoned to death for his faith in Jesus Christ

Quote

"A few days later there was a meeting of the believers. ... They proposed two men: Joseph and Matthias. Then they prayed, 'Lord, you know the thoughts of everyone, so show us which of these two you have chosen to serve as an apostle in the place of Judas.' Then they drew lots to choose between the two men, and the one chosen was Matthias, who was added to the group of eleven apostles." (Acts 1: 23 – 26)

St. Michael the Archangel

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Not applicable

Date of Death
Not applicable

Feast Day
September 29

Patron Saint of:
ambulance drivers.
police officers.
sick people

Prayer
St. Michael, Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the
wickedness and snares of
the devil.
May God rebuke him, we
humbly pray. And you,
Prince of the heavenly host,
by the power of God, thrust
into Hell Satan and the
other evil spirits who prowl
the world for the ruin of
souls. Amen.

Biography

St. Michael was created by God to protect His people - to protect us. He is a spiritual being which we call an angel. St. Michael is an archangel because he is a leader among the angels. He is very powerful.

When some of the heavenly angels turned against God, this great archangel set up his battle cry of love and obedience. Michael, which means "Who is like God", led and chased Satan and the bad angels out of heaven. God rewarded Michael by making him prince of all the heavenly angels.

From the beginning of time, St. Michael was the leader of God's chosen people. In the New Testament he is the guardian angel and protector of the Catholic Church. We can pray to St. Michael at any time, particularly when we need protection.

Quote

"You should be aware that the word "angel" denotes a function rather than a nature. Whenever some act of wondrous power must be performed, Michael is sent, so that his action and his name may make it clear that no one can do what God does by his superior power."

from a homily by Pope Saint Gregory the Great

St. Nicholas of Myra

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
346 A.D.

Feast Day
December 6

Patron Saint of:
Greece, Russia,
children, sailors

Prayer

St. Nicholas, we thank you
for your example of
generosity. Pray for us, that
we may be loving and
generous with others.
Amen.

Biography

Little is known about the early life of the saint we recognize today, but there are many stories of his generosity and holiness. For example, this saint raised to life three young boys who had been murdered. He also gave three bags of gold to a man who was very poor - so poor that this man was going to sell his daughters. During a voyage to the Holy Land, this saint calmed the seas when a violent storm threatened the ship.

This saint lived 1600 years ago in what is now the country of Turkey. He spent his adult life in a monastery and later became the Bishop of the area. This saint is the patron of Greece and Russia, of children, and of sailors. In many parts of the world he still plays a role as Santa Claus.

Quote

St. Patrick

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
387

Date of Death
461

Feast Day
March 17

Patron Saint of:
Ireland, engineers,
against snake bites

Prayers

Saint Patrick, you loved to make people happy by telling wonderful stories about God. Help us to tell others how much God loves us. Amen.

God our Father, you sent Saint Patrick to preach your glory to the people of Ireland. By the help of his prayers, may all Christians proclaim your love to all men. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Biography

Patrick was born in 387. He was seized from his father's farm at the age of sixteen and sold as a slave to a chief in Ireland. Despite the harsh life there, Patrick held on to his faith and prayed much as he tended sheep in the mountains.

After six years he escaped and returned to his home. His captivity, however, had a deep religious effect on him and he longed to bring his Christian faith to the Irish people. In those days the Irish did not know about Jesus. Patrick went to Rome to study for the priesthood. When he became a priest he was sent to England. After some time, the Pope made him a bishop and then sent him as a missionary to Ireland.

Because Patrick was a very likeable person, the Irish people welcomed him. They loved hearing Patrick's stories about Jesus and Mary. Patrick traveled through Ireland preaching the Christian religion. Before he died, the whole nation was Christian.

Despite such great success, St Patrick never grew proud. He called himself a poor sinner and gave all the praise to God. Patrick died in 461.

Quote

"Christ shield me this day; Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I arise, Christ in the heart of every person who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of every person who speaks of me, Christ in the eye that sees me, Christ in the ear that hears me."
From the "Breastplate of St. Patrick",

St. Paul of the Cross

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
January 3, 1694

Date of Death
October 18, 1775

Feast Day
October 19

Patron Saint of:
unknown

Prayer
Lord, may the prayers
of St. Paul,
who loved the Cross
with a singular love,
gain Your grace for us.
May we be inspired by
his example and embrace
our own cross with courage.
Amen.

Biography

Paul was born in Genoa in the year 1694. His youth was spent in great innocence and piety. One day in a vision, he was inspired to found a congregation in honor of the Passion of Jesus Christ. He was vested by the bishop with the habit that had been shown to him in the vision, the same that the Passionists wear at the present time. He chose as the badge of his Order a heart with three nails, in memory of the sufferings of Jesus.

Paul began as a layman to preach the Passion of Christ. The first house of the Passionists was opened at Orbitello. Later, Paul established a larger community at the Church of Saints John and Paul in Rome.

For fifty years Paul remained the untiring missionary of Italy. God granted him marvelous gifts of soul, but he treated himself with the greatest severity, believing himself to be a useless servant and a great sinner. He died in Rome in the year 1775, at the age of eighty-one, while the Passion of Christ was being read to him.

Quote

"Therefore, be constant in practicing every virtue, and especially in imitating the patience of our dear Jesus, for this is the summit of pure love."

St. Paul of the Cross

St. Paul

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

3 A.D.

Date of Death

65 A.D.

Feast Day

June 29

Patron Saint of:

authors, reporters, musicians,
tentmakers, evangelists

Prayer

Saint Paul, you were an
Apostle of Christ and a
missionary to foreign
countries. Though extremely
learned, you relied completely
on the Wisdom received from
the Spirit and taught from the
abundance of your heart.

Help my heart to burn with
love for Jesus and for all His
people. May all those who
preach Christ to others realize
that their actions speak louder
than any words they may use.

Teach them to use their
talents in conveying their God-
given message but to rely
above all on the promptings of
the Spirit. Amen.

Biography

Before Paul met Jesus, he had been called Saul. He did not believe in Jesus and he persecuted Christians. Then he was converted. One day, as he was riding on a horse, he was knocked to the ground by what seemed to be a lightening bolt. During the next few days he began to believe in Jesus. He was baptized, and his name was changed to Paul. He showed his love for Jesus for the rest of his life.

Paul traveled from city to city telling everyone that Jesus is Lord. During his many trips, he encountered troubles and dangers. He was whipped, stoned, shipwrecked and lost at sea. Many times he was hungry, thirsty and cold; yet he always trusted in God.

He never stopped preaching. Paul's love for Jesus was like a fire that burned in his heart. "The love of Jesus presses me onward," he said. God gave him great comfort and joy.

We read about Paul's adventures for Jesus in the "Acts of the Apostles". In the end he was imprisoned and sentenced to death. He was beheaded in the year 67, during Nero's terrible persecution of the Christians.

Quote

*"And so I write to all of you in Rome whom God loves
and has called to be his own people:
May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace."
St. Paul (in his letter to the Romans)*

St. Perpetua and St. Felicity

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
203 A.D.

Feast Day
March 7

Patron Saint of:
martyrs

Prayer
Dear holy saints,
you showed great faith and
bravery to the very end of
your lives.
Pray for us that we too will
have the courage to live a
faithful life.
Amen.

Biography

Today we remember, not one saint, but two saints. These saints were quite different from each other. One was a rich woman, and the other was a slave. However, one thing that these two saints had in common was their faith in Jesus Christ ... and both of them were killed because of their faith in the year 203. Even though they lived so many years ago, their story was written in a diary and in several eyewitness accounts.

In those days, Christians, followers of Christ, were often arrested. The rich woman, whose name was Perpetua, was one of those arrested, even though she had a baby son. Her father tried to convince her to deny her faith and save her life, but she refused to deny her belief in Jesus Christ. The other woman - Felicity was her name - was pregnant at the time of her arrest. Both were thrown into a large amphitheater, where other people watched them as lions devoured them.

This seems like such a tragic, horrid story ... and it is. The wonderful lesson to be learned from the lives of Perpetua and Felicity is that their faith was so important that they were willing to die for it. They were martyrs. The Catholic Church recognizes this incredible faith, and we now know these two women as Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicity.

Quote

"The day of the martyrs' victory dawned. They marched from their cells into the amphitheater, as if into heaven, with cheerful looks and graceful bearing. If they trembled it was for joy and not for fear."

From a story of the death of the martyrs at Carthage

St. Peter Damian

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1007

Date of Death
1072

Feast Day
February 21

Patron Saint of:
Insomniacs

Prayer

Dear God,
We ask St. Peter Damian to
show us how to live
generously for God. Help
us to find the Lord with
childlike trust and use our
gifts to make Jesus and His
Church more loved and
appreciated.
Amen.

Biography

Peter was born into a very large family in Italy. His parents died when he was very young, and thus was orphaned. He was sent to live with an older brother who did not treat him very well. Another brother named Damian became aware of the situation, and brought him to his own home.

Under the loving care and guidance of Damian, Peter's life changed for the better. Peter appreciated the love of his brother so much, and was so grateful, that he took on his brother's name and called himself Peter Damian.

Peter became a teacher and taught at a university., but he felt the Lord's calling him into a different direction. He decided to become a monk and live the rest of his life in prayer and penance.

He prayed and sacrificed so that many people in the Church would become holy. He wrote many books on theology to help people to deepen their faith.

Peter Damian was a great reformer, encouraging others to live closer to God. If he were alive today, he would, no doubt, have applauded the greater emphasis on prayer that is shown by the many prayer meetings attended by our Catholic communities today.

Quote

"...Let us faithfully transmit to posterity the example of virtue which we have received from our forefathers."

St. Peter Damian

St. Peter

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth

Date of Death

Feast Day
June 29

Patron Saint of:
fishermen, bakers,
butchers, clock makers,
shoemakers, shipbuilders

Prayer

Saint Peter, first among all the Apostles, you showed how even a strong person can be weak.

Help us to ask Jesus for forgiveness whenever we deny the truth. Amen.

Biography

Simon was a fisherman when Jesus called him to be an Apostle. "I will make you a fisher of men," Jesus told Peter. Later, Jesus chose him to be "the Rock," who would be a brave and strong leader for the early Christians. Jesus said, "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my Church."

Peter was not always courageous. He spoke bravely but, at times, when things became difficult, he was afraid. When Jesus was arrested, Peter was asked if he was a follower of Jesus. Peter denied it three times because he was afraid. Immediately he was sorry and he wept bitterly. Jesus forgave Peter.

At Pentecost, Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit. He ruled the Church bravely as the first Pope. The early Christians were fiercely persecuted, but Peter was willing to die for Jesus. In the end he was taken prisoner and was nailed to a cross upside down, as he did not feel worthy to be crucified in the same way as Jesus.

A large Church was built on the spot where Peter was martyred on Vatican Hill.

Quote

*"To you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven.
Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven.
Whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed also in heaven."*

Saint Rita

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
May 22, 1457

Feast Day
May 22

Patron Saint of:
impossible cases, sickness,
infertility, widows

Prayer

Heavenly Father, You
granted to St. Rita a share
in the Passion of Your Son.

Give us courage and
strength in time of trial, so
that by our patient
endurance we may enter
more deeply into the
Paschal Mystery of Your
Son. Amen.

Biography

Rita begged her parents to allow her to enter the convent. Instead they arranged a marriage for her.

Rita became a good mother and wife. Her husband, however, had a very violent temper. He often mistreated his wife and taught their children his evil ways. Rita prayed and tried to receive the sacraments frequently.

Her husband was stabbed by an enemy but repented before he died because his good wife, Rita, prayed for him. Shortly after this, her two sons also died. Now Rita was alone in the world. She filled her days with prayer, fasting, penances of many kinds as well as good works. She joined the convent of the Augustinian nuns and began a new life of perfect obedience and great charity.

Sister Rita had a great devotion to the Passion of Christ. "Please let me suffer like You, divine Savior," she said one day and suddenly one of the thorns from the crucifix struck her on the forehead. This left a deep wound, which never did heal. This caused her much suffering until her death on May 22, 1457.

Quote

"Please let me suffer like You, divine Savior."

St. Scholastica

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
480

Date of Death
543

Feast Day
February 10

Patron Saint of:
those needing protection
from storms, nuns

Prayer

Dear God,
thank you for Saint
Scholastica. She drew
herself closer to God by the
way she treated others.
Help us learn to value
people who share with us
their good example and
spiritual attitudes.
Amen.

Biography

Scholastica was born, with her twin brother, St. Benedict, in Italy, in 480. When they were born, their parents praised God. Scholastica and her brother were cherished, and their parents tried to raise them well. When Scholastica was a young girl, she promised herself to Jesus. Upon the death of her parents, she went to visit her brother, who ran a monastery and was the leader of many monks.

When she became older, she founded a convent not far from her brother's monastery. Scholastica used to visit her brother once a year. They would spend their time together praying and talking about their spiritual life.

They spent their very last day together in prayer, speaking of God. Scholastica could sense her time of death was near, so she begged her brother to stay longer. Benedict told her he could not. She then bent her head in prayer and asked God to prolong their visit. Suddenly there was a severe storm, and Benedict did indeed stay longer to visit with his sister. They talked until dawn about the life of the soul. They parted the next morning. Three days later, Benedict was praying in his monastery when he saw the soul of his sister rise towards heaven in the form of a dove.

St. Scholastica teaches us that, out of all of our possessions, the one most prized by those who love us is our time and presence. Through her, we learn to make ourselves available to those who need us, instead of worrying about schedules and work.

Quote

*"Well, I asked you and you would not listen;
so I asked my God and he did listen."*

St. Rita to her brother, St. Benedict,
when he did not want to remain with her as death drew near.

St. Teresa of Avila

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1515

Date of Death
October 4, 1582

Feast Day
October 15

Patron Saint of:
Headaches, lacemakers,
people in religious orders

Prayer
O God, You raised up
St. Teresa by Your Spirit
so that she could manifest
to the Church
the way to perfection.
Nourish us with the food of
her heavenly teaching,
and fill us with a desire for
holiness.
Amen.

Biography

Teresa was the daughter of noble parents in Spain. When she was only seven years of age, she and her little brother liked to read stories from the lives of the saints. One of her favorite games was playing "hermit" in their father's garden.

When Teresa was still quite young, she became crippled by disease and was unable to walk. She prayed to St. Joseph, who cured her.

Teresa lost her mother when she was twelve. She begged the Mother of God to be her mother. Five years after her mother's death she joined the Carmelite Order. She built many new convents.

By a life of constant prayer, Teresa brought many souls to Jesus. Her many writings show her great love of God.

On October 4, 1582, Jesus appeared to Teresa with many saints. She begged Him to take her to Himself. After her prayer, her soul was taken to heaven.

Quote

"Let nothing trouble you, let nothing make you afraid. All things pass away. God never changes. Patience obtains everything. God alone is enough."
St. Teresa of Avila

St. Therese of the Child Jesus

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
January 2, 1873

Date of Death
September 30, 1897

Feast Day
October 1

Patron Saint of:
foreign missions, florists,
missionaries

Prayer
O God our Father, You
destined Your Kingdom for
Your children who are
humble. Help us to imitate
the way of St. Therese,
so that,
by her intercession,
we may attain the eternal
glory which You promised.
Amen.

Biography

When Therese was eight years old, she was cured because a statue of the Blessed Virgin smiled upon her.

When Therese was still very young she did kind little deeds for everyone. She prepared for her First Holy Communion by making many little sacrifices. She became a very special friend of Jesus.

Therese entered the Carmelite convent at the age of fifteen. She wanted to save souls, and to help priests save souls, by prayers, sacrifice, and suffering. Her "Little Way" means love and trust in God.

St. Therese is called the Little Flower of Jesus because she loved the Infant Jesus and, like a child, did little things to please God.

When she was dying, St. Therese pressed her crucifix to her heart and, looking up to heaven, she said, "I love Him! My God, I love You!" She was only twenty-four years old when she died in 1897.

Quote

*"From the age of three, I never refused our good God anything.
I have never given Him anything but love."*
St. Therese of the Child Jesus

St. Thomas More

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1477

Date of Death
July 6, 1535

Feast Day
June 22

Patron Saint of:
adopted children,
politicians, step-parents,
widowers, lawyers,
large families

Prayer
Saint Thomas More, you
knew how to praise
God and to be happy. Help
me to be cheerful
throughout life and to do
what is good. Amen.

Prayer of St. Thomas More
Give me the grace to long
for Your holy sacraments,
and especially to rejoice in
the presence of Your body,
sweet Savior Christ, in the
holy sacrament of the altar.
Amen.

Biography

Thomas was a cheerful man who loved to spend time with his friends. He was a famous lawyer and writer.

He raised a large family. In a time when people felt it was not important for girls to be educated, Thomas believed that girls should be as well-educated as their male counterparts.

Thomas made home life enjoyable for his family because he was so pleasant to be with. He also helped the poor as much as he could.

Thomas was deeply spiritual. He was a man of prayer. He realized that being a true Christian required God's grace and help.

Thomas held many government positions. He was a loyal subject, but he was loyal to God first of all. King Henry VIII wanted Thomas to disobey God's law, Thomas refused. He was condemned to death for that, yet he forgave his judges, telling them that he hoped to see them in heaven.

He was beheaded in 1535, at the age of fifty-seven. Thomas More was proclaimed a saint by Pope Pius XI in 1935.

Quote

*"What does it avail to know that there is a God,
which you not only believe by Faith, but also know by reason:
what does it avail that you know Him if you think little of Him?"*
Saint Thomas More

St. Timothy

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
Unknown

Date of Death
67 A.D.

Feast Day
January 26

Patron Saint of:
those with stomach
diseases

Prayer
Dear Saint Timothy,
you were a most faithful
and gentle disciple of Saint
Paul and, like him, you
traveled much to bring the
Good News to all people.
The letters that Saint Paul
wrote to you reveal your
zeal and inspire us with
confidence in you. You too
were cast into prison and
you too gave your life for
Christ. So with confidence
we dare to ask, please pray
for help for {name of
sufferer}, if it be God's will.
Amen.

Biography

Timothy was born in Israel. His father was a Greek gentile, and his mother was Jewish. He became a Christian in the year 47; he was converted by Saint Paul.

After Jesus's death on the cross, his disciples continued to travel from town to town, country to country, telling others about Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. This is how Christianity spread to other places and eventually to Canada.

Timothy became the partner, assistant, and close personal friend of St. Paul. Timothy showed determination and perseverance in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ. He became the bishop of Ephesus, a city in northern Greece. St. Paul wrote letters to the people of Ephesus ... the Ephesians. St. Paul also wrote two letters to Timothy. We can find these letters in the bible -- in the New Testament.

St. Timothy lived his faith and eventually died for his faith in Jesus. In the year 67, St. Timothy was stoned to death.

Quote

*"But you, man of God,
strive for righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, and gentleness.
Run your best in the race of faith, and win eternal life for yourself."*

1 Timothy 6: 11

St. Vincent de Paul

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1581

Date of Death
1660

Feast Day
September 27

Patron Saint of:
charitable societies, prisoners,
volunteers, hospital workers,
lepers, lost articles

Prayer
St. Vincent de Paul, you
happily spent your life giving
everything you had to God's
poor. Help me to realize that
God loves me when I give
cheerfully.
Amen.

Dear Saint Vincent de Paul,
the mere mention of your
name suggests a litany of your
virtues: humility, zeal, mercy,
and self-sacrifice. Inspire all
charitable workers and
volunteers, especially those
who minister to the spiritually
and materially poor. Amen.

Biography

Vincent was born in France and grew up to be a priest. When Vincent was a young priest, he was captured by Turkish pirates who sold him into slavery. For two years, he worked hard for his masters. He converted his last master to Christianity and was then set free.

Upon returning to Paris, the queen of France invited him to be a priest in her palace. At first he agreed, but then had a change of heart. Vincent realized that God was calling him to be a true friend to the poor and to care for the needy. He left the palace and went to work with the poor.

Vincent de Paul was a priest who was most remembered for his kindness. Poor children were always hanging on to his coattails. To them, he gave food, clothing, toys and all the love that was in his heart.

'Give' was the word that described his daily life. He worked hard to earn money and then gave it all away to the poor. To help his work with the poor, Vincent gathered a group of men and women who were dedicated to God. Today, these men and women continue the work Vincent started.

Throughout his life, Vincent remained a very humble man. The queen of France came to visit him when he was on his deathbed. She said to him that God must be very pleased with him. To her surprise, Vincent shook his head. He replied, "I should have done more."

Quote

*"We must love our neighbor as being made in the image of God
and as an object of His love."*

St. Vincent de Paul

St. Vincent Ferrer

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
1350

Date of Death
April 5, 1419

Feast Day
April 5

Patron Saint of:
brick makers,
plumbers

Prayer

Biography

About 650 years ago, Vincent was born in Spain. He was educated by an order of priests known as the Dominicans, and he eventually entered the order, even though his family disapproved.

Vincent taught theology, which is the study of God. He also served as an advisor to the King of Aragon. However, he devoted most of his time to missionary work, traveling to other places and preaching to the people about Jesus Christ. He traveled to countries like France, Italy, Germany, Holland, England, Scotland, and Ireland. Many people decided to follow Jesus after they heard Vincent preach.

St. Vincent had the gift of tongues and was known as a miracle worker. The virtues he demonstrated well were humility and prayerfulness.

He died on April 5 at the age of 69; as a result, April 5 is the feast day of St. Vincent.

His motto was: "Whatever you do, think not of yourself, but of God." This is a good motto for us to follow as well.

Quote

*"If you truly want to help the soul of your neighbor,
you should approach God first with all your heart.
Ask him simply to fill you with charity, the greatest of all virtues."*
St. Vincent Ferrer

St. Wenceslaus

Some Basic Facts

Date of Birth
907

Date of Death
September 28, 929

Feast Day
September 28

Patron Saint of:
Bohemia
Czech Republic
Moravia

Prayer

Dear Saint Wenceslaus,
you loved your people and
cared for the poor and
needy. Inspire me to follow
your loving example.
Amen.

Biography

Wenceslaus was raised a Christian by his grandmother, St. Ludmila. However, his mother and brother were against Christianity. They were angry when Wenceslaus was declared king after the death of his father.

Wenceslaus was a gracious man of great faith. He gave to the poor, clothed the naked, fed the hungry, and offered hospitality to travelers. As king, he loved all his people, rich and poor.

His brother, Boleslaus, was very jealous. One morning when Wenceslaus was on his way to Mass, Boleslaus followed him to the church door. As Wenceslaus was about to enter the church, Boleslaus struck him with his sword. Wenceslaus was killed and immediately declared a martyr.

Quote

"Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit."
Saint Wenceslaus (just before he died)